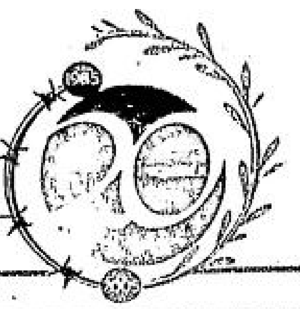
■ WORLD / A8

US feminist pioneer Betty Friedan dies

■ NEWS / A2

Cory, Erap meet behind closed doors



Do you have a story to tell about Edsa I? The INQUIRER is looking for those untold stories (photos, too) that contributed, no matter how small, to the first People Power in 1986 that so stunned the world and inspired and emboldened people in chains everywhere to break free. The contributions that will be selected by the editors will be used for the INQUIRER's special celebration of the 20th anniversary of Edsa I. **Send your contribution, with your address and contact number, not later than Feb. 15 to fdelmundo@inquirer.com.ph**

Tragedy wake-up call for gov't, say senators

THE TRAGEDY THAT MARRED THE ANNIVERSARY of the noontime show "Wowowee" on Saturday was a wake-up call for the government to institute reforms that would drastically reduce the country's grinding poverty, senators said yesterday.

Their counterparts in the House of Representatives said the stampede at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig City was a "symptom of a wider

TRAGEDY/ A19

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, February 6, 2006 ★★★ 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 60 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Opposition leader bugging Palace, Gonzales says

By Christine O. Avendaño

SSSHH! SAKA KO NA LANG SASABIHIN KUNG SINO!

MALACAÑANG IS BEING bugged, apparently by an opposition leader, says National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales.

Gonzales told reporters

OPPOSITION / A20

NERI: Back to Neda from DBM.

PUNO: Replaces Reyes at DILG.

ANDAYA: Replaces Neri at DBM.

Puno takes over DILG; Andaya to DBM

By Christine O. Avendaño

AS EXPECTED, CONTROVERSIAL ANTIPOLO Rep. Ronaldo Puno, a known political operator behind President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign in the 2004 presidential election, has been appointed interior secretary.

He replaces Angelo Reyes, who was moved to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

As early as November last year, Malacañang floated the idea that Puno, president of Ms Arroyo's party Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), would be appointed to the top post in the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Another staunch ally of Ms Arroyo in the House of Representatives, where an impeachment case is expected to be filed against her this year, is joining the Cabinet.

Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya, chair of the House appropriations committee the past six years, is taking the place of Romulo Neri at the Department of Budget and Management.

Neri is returning to his old job as director general of the National Economic and Development Authority.

The latest Cabinet appointments were announced yesterday by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Asked whether the announcement of Cabinet appointees was the last, Bunye said in a

PUNO/ A4

Probers find lapses in security setup

Someone will answer for 74 deaths –Gonzalez

By Leila B. Salaverria and Luige A. del Puerto

JUSTICE SECRETARY Raul Gonzalez said yesterday someone should answer for the deaths of 74 people in a game show stampede, and the head of an inquiry panel said he found "shortcomings" in the security preparations for the event.

"There will be responsibility. There will definitely be people responsible," Gonzalez said in a phone interview. "That's why the order of the President is to find criminal or civil liabilities."

Gonzalez, however, refused to pinpoint any specific person or organization that might be culpable for the disastrous stampede last Saturday outside the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City. About 500 people were injured in crush of fans struggling to get in to watch the anniversary celebration of the popular ABS-CBN game show "Wowowee."

"If I will say something, it will prejudge the outcome of the in-

PROBERS/ A19

NO BARS strong enough for people desperately seeking better lives, Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpuz, head of the fact-finding team looking into Saturday's PhilSports Arena stampede, finds out during an on-site inspection.

RUDY ESPERAS

Encyclical reexamines role of state and Church

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE JAN. 29 PASTORAL STATEMENT of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines came close on the heels of the first encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI that the Vatican released on Jan. 25.

The encyclical, titled "Deus Caritas Est" (God is Love), was signed by Benedict on Dec. 25, 2005. Addressed to bishops and the more than one billion lay members of the Catholic Church, it sets out the Church's policy on doctrinal matters and defines the tone of the new papacy.

As pointed out by Vatican-based religion writers, an encyclical is always scrutinized closely for its insight into a Pope's thoughts and plans, and the first such document is seen as a "charter" for a new papacy.

When the Filipino bishops met in promulgating their Jan. 29 pastoral letter, which castigated the "acts of evasion and obstruction of the truth" by the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo in connection with the alleged rigging of the 2004 election results, they were probably sensitive to the political messages be-

ENCYCLICAL/ A7

Deadly stampede also brings out best in people

By Luige A. del Puerto

SURGEONS AT THE RIZAL MEDical Center were having breakfast when the first victims of the deadly stampede at the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City streamed in.

As ambulances brought in the injured and the dead, it became clear to the hospital staff that this was not going to be an ordinary Saturday.

Within minutes, a system meant to save as many number of lives as possible during an emergency was put into motion.

But the hospital would have been overwhelmed in coping with the sheer number of patients—if not for the many hands that quickly appeared, as if from nowhere.

For while disasters may bring out the worst in people, they can also show the best in them.

"That's what is good about us Filipinos. *Nagdadamayan tayo* (We care for each other)," said Arnel Sulliano, a hospital administrator.

Within the next hour, help poured in.

Pharmaceutical companies offered pain relievers and other medicines. Politicians gave away slippers. A nearby, well-known motel sent linens.

One politician who had heard that the hospital only had one X-ray machine sent one.

"Victoria Court sent 20 or 30 linens. They sent more today," said Sulliano. The popular motel is about 300 meters from the hospital.

"We were able to cope because many helped, and for that we are very thankful," Sulliano said.

The military and police also pitched in with their own doctors, nurses and ambulances.

As the number of victims mounted, the RMC staff, long accustomed to emergency situations, quickly adjusted and began the dogged work of checking patients and giving medications.

The hospital declared a Code

DEADLY/ A20

RAFFY LERMA

AN OLD woman breaks down from the PhilSports Arena railings after disaster struck.

North Cotabato elderly dies with her dream

By DJ Yap

EVEN AT THE AGE OF 75, FELICIDAD Trinidad de la Vega didn't want to be a burden to her seven children. So she had taken a job as a nanny.

She had also gone to the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City in the hope that she would win a few thousand pesos at the popular TV game show "Wowowee" that would raffle off huge cash prizes.

De la Vega had come to Manila to visit her children and had hoped luck would smile on her and she could share it with them before she returned to her North Cotabato home.

Instead, tragedy struck.

She was one of the scores of people who were trampled to death during Saturday's stampede at the PhilSports Arena.

Yesterday, De la Vega's family arrived at Arlington Memorial Chapel on Arane-

NORTH/ A4

DREAM prizes offered by "Wowowee": House and lot, two tricycles, two taxis, one jeepney and P1 million in cash await winners of raffle draw scheduled during the popular game show's first anniversary celebration.

EDWIN BACASMAS

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon and Eastern Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers, while Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/02/06/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Second FRONT PAGE

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Cory, Erap hold meeting

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and TJ Burgonio

A BREWING ALLIANCE?

Speculations of an emerging alliance flew thick and fast yesterday after two former Presidents, who used to be on the opposite sides of the political fence, finally met and talk yesterday.

Former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada met behind closed doors yesterday at the San Juan Medical Center after attending a thanksgiving Mass for the recovery of Estrada who underwent eye surgery on Wednesday.

The two former leaders talked for more than an hour. But details of the discussions were not disclosed.

It was the first time since Estrada's ouster five years ago, where Aquino played a key role, that the two former Presidents met face to face. Both smiled and posed for the cameras after the closed-door meeting.

The thanksgiving Mass, which started at 4:30 p.m., was also attended by Senate President Franklin Drilon, movie actress Susan Roces, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and several opposition leaders.

This was the first time Aquino, Estrada, Drilon and Roces, widow of the late actor Fernando Poe Jr.—key personalities in the broad alliance that has been calling for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation—heard Mass together.

After about an hour, Aquino, Estrada, Roces and the other opposition leaders went inside an adjacent room for snacks.

Aquino sat on the center, with Estrada on her right side and Roces on her left side. Estrada was wearing a beige jacket and a pair of black shades to conceal his eyes.

But nobody dared to talk about the details of the rare meeting.

"We did not talk politics," Drilon said in a phone interview. "There was a little merienda after the Mass, and we exchanged pleasantries. There was no talk of politics."

Speculations that politics, particularly the current political crisis, topped the agenda of the huge gathering of the country's leaders were "an expected conclusion," Drilon said.

"Nothing happened. It was just a thanksgiving Mass to pray for the speedy recovery of Estrada as well as for the victims of the Ultra tragedy," he insisted.

Drilon said Aquino asked him to accompany her to the thanksgiving Mass after Estrada invited her.

Aquino herself said she came "to pray for the victims of yesterday's tragedy," referring to the stampede at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig City, where 74 persons were killed, after rushing to watch and join a popular noontime game show.

"I just came here to pray and attend the thanksgiving Mass for the successful operation of President Estrada," Aquino told reporters. "I am glad that we are all here to pray," Aquino, who arrived with her son Noynoy, said.

In an interview over dzBB as the guests were leaving the hospital, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada mouthed the same line: "We did not talk politics."

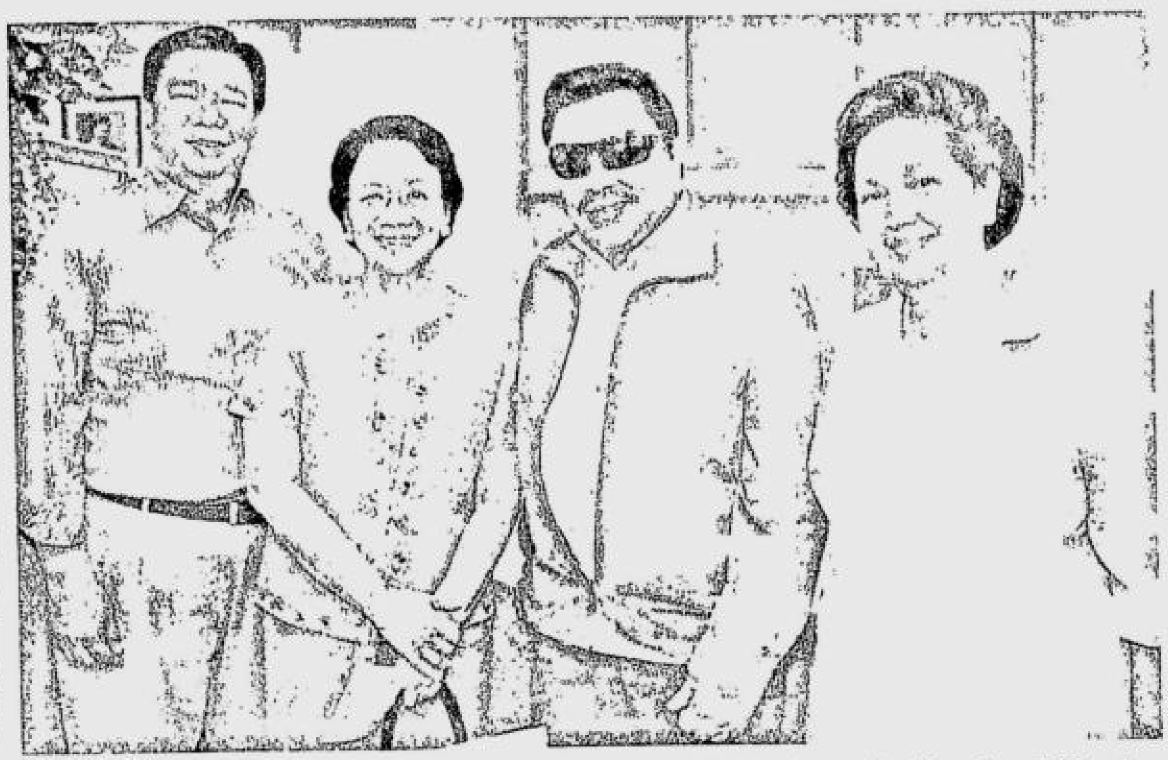
But the grin on the face of Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay, when asked the same question, tells otherwise.

"The thing speaks for itself," Binay said.

"The fact that two widows and a womanizer are here together is a statement on itself," Estrada's lawyer Rene Saguisag also said.

But Saguisag quickly said the meeting was purely "a religious social event."

After their meeting, Estrada went out of the hospital and escorted Aquino to her car.



SENATE President Franklin Drilon, former President Corazon Aquino, former President Joseph Estrada, and actress Susan Roces pose after attending a Mass at the San Juan Hospital Chapel Sunday afternoon.

JOSEPH VIDAL/PRIB

Corruption in health services bared

Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL-LEVEL CORRUPTION IS gnawing at the quality of health services in public clinics, depriving poor households of professional care and driving them towards self-medication, according to Berlin-based Transparency International.

Based on surveys conducted by the global non-government organization, 19 percent of municipal administrators in the country said there were cases of bribery in their offices while 32 percent cited instances of fund theft.

In the global report on corruption in the health sector dated Feb. 1, TI said corruption was depriving those most in need of essential medical care and helping spawn drug-resistant strains of deadly diseases.

The TI report said that while majority of people employed in the sector perform their functions with diligence and integrity, there is evidence of bribery and fraud across the breadth of health services.

In the Philippine case, the report said a 10 percent increase in the extortion of bribes by medical personnel was shown to:

- Reduce the rate of child immunization by up to 20 percent.
- Increase waiting time in public health clinics by 30 percent.
- Dampen patient satisfaction by 30 percent.
- Reduce the odds of completing vaccination by four times.

"The results showed clearly that corruption undermines the delivery of health services in the Philippines," the report said.

The chapter on the Philippines was written by Omar Azfar and Tugrul Gurgur, researchers at University of Maryland, who compiled public survey results and anecdotal evidence which indicated that much of the corruption here appeared to be at the local level.

Data collected in 2000 from 80 municipalities was used to assess the impact of corruption in local governments on health outcomes.

While a significant number of municipal administrators cited cases of corruption, only 2.5 percent of municipal health officers admitted there were cases of bribery and only 16.5 percent agreed there was theft of funds.

"Most kinds of corruption were found to be more prevalent in the municipal administrator's office than in other offices, perhaps due to the administrator's office exerting more authority and thus having more opportunity to extract rents," the report said.

The results also suggested that corruption was not affecting the rural areas the same way it was affecting the urban areas. In the urban areas, demand for public health care was noted to be more "corruption-elastic"—which meant that households would simply stop using public healthcare facilities in response to higher corruption incidence.

"Households in rural areas, on the other hand, suffer with more waiting at public health clinics, late immunization of infants, and less satisfaction with public health services as compared to households in urban areas facing the same level of corruption," the report said.

The presence of alternative health facilities in urban areas, either in the form of private health care providers or other public health facilities, may be the reason for such differences, it added.

Ornamental plant growers get GMA fund

By TJ Burgonio

SOME LIQUID FERTILIZERS bought from the P3-million fund allocated by the Department of Agriculture for the lone district of Cagayan de Oro City Rep. Constantino Jaraula ended up in the hands of farmers tending ornamental plants.

This was one of the many oddities that Commission on Audit teams found after traveling to some parts of Region 10 from Jan. 8 to 14 to validate if farmers received the farm inputs procured from the DA's P728-million fertilizer fund.

The DA released P73 million to the region in 2004 for the purchase of fertilizers under the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) program based on the proposal of 21 government officials.

The COA teams, however, validated only P24 million allocated to six proponents, including Jaraula. Of the amount, P19 million was used to buy 20,250 bottles of foliar liquid fertilizers, and P5 million for 10,000 bags of SAKA organic fertilizer.

In its audit report, the COA noted that 59 farmers tending commercial ornamental plants in Barangays Iponan and Linangohan-Tablon in Cagayan de Oro City availed of a total of 300 bottles of foliar liquid fertilizer.

"Interview with the sample beneficiaries in Misamis Oriental disclosed that in Barangay Iponan and Tablon, the recipients had no farm for rice and corn, but only a small lot where ornamental plants were planted for sale," it said.

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the COA's Jan. 20 memorandum addressed to Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban.

In other barangays, the farmers used the fertilizers not on rice, but on vegetables. They were "hesitant" to use these in their corn plantations because there was no DA technician to orient them on its use, the COA said.

Farmers in other barangays received their fertilizers as late as November 2005, it added.

The COA also noted other irregularities in the distribution of the fertilizers elsewhere in the region.

The district of Rep. Herminia Ramiro (2nd District, Misamis Occidental) received P3 million from the DA, but failed to account for 2,530 bottles out of the total 6,250 bottles of liquid fertilizers procured.

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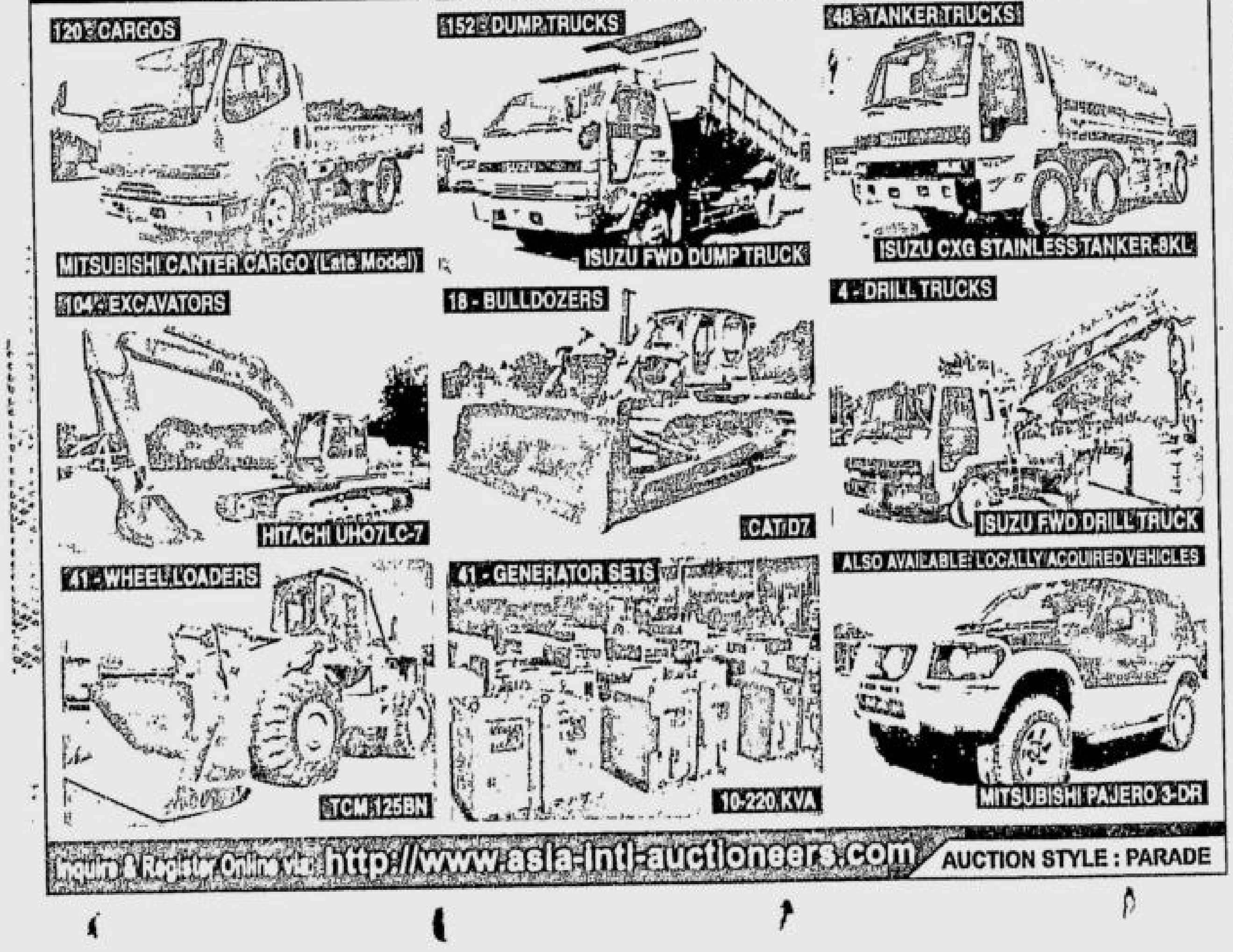

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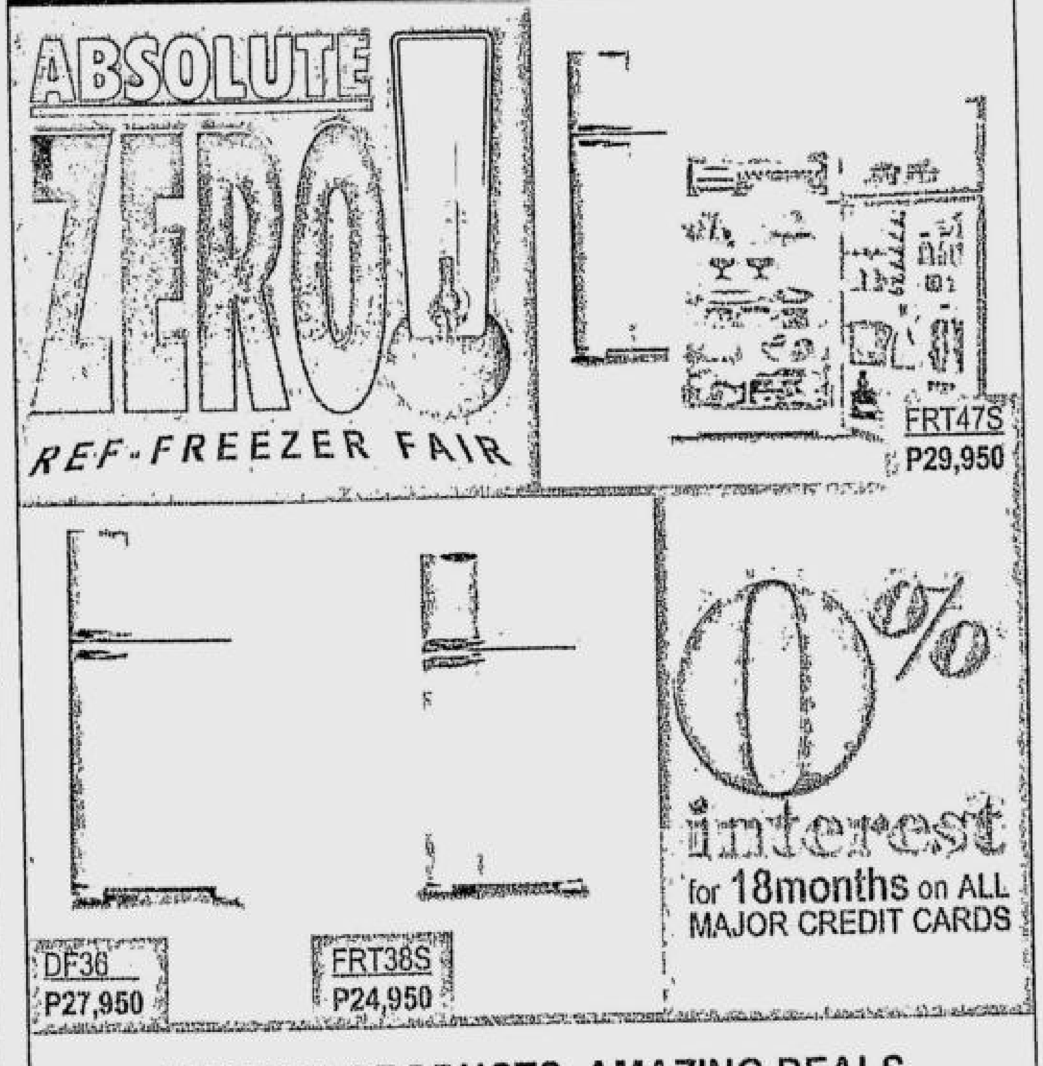

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Meet the celebrity housemates of 'Pinoy Big Brother'

By Nini Valera

EVEN BEFORE THE 14 CELEBRITY HOUSEmates of the reality TV show "Pinoy Big Brother"—aired over ABS-CBN—could be introduced to the public last night, one housemate, Rico Robles, a deejay for RX radio, already faced eviction.

INQUIRER Entertainment learned yesterday from PBB unit manager and director Lauren Dyogi that Robles had violated his contract with PBB when he renewed his contract with RX radio.

But Dyogi and business unit head Linggit Tan gave Robles a chance to retrieve his contract with RX and to produce a certification that said the contract was null and void.

At 9 p.m. yesterday, RX finally faxed a copy of the contract releasing Robles from the station.

Thus, Robles remained a housemate and was able to join yesterday's launch of the "PBB Celebrity Edition" at the Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

He would have been replaced with another housemate, who would be brought to the PBB house next Saturday as part of that day's telecast.

Dyogi and Tan had given Robles until 7 p.m. last night to produce the documents which Robles finally complied with.

And so there were still 14.

The other celebrity housemates are sexy actresses Aleck Bovick and Keanna Reeves; actors John Pratts, Rustom Padilla and Christian Vasquez; one-legged triathlon athlete Rudy Fernandez and Karetado gold medalist Gretchen Malalad; television hosts Angela Calina and Bianca Gonzales; singer Roxanne Barcelo; musician Eroll "Budoy" Marabiles; fashion designer Mich Dulce; and Bench underwear model Zanjoe Marudo.

The list of housemates had been a closely guarded secret of the PBB production staff and was finalized on Friday night. Not even high-ranking executives of ABS-CBN knew the housemates' identities.

The "PBB Celebrity Edition" should have been launched on Saturday but it was postponed to the next day because of the "Wowowee" stampede at the PhilSports Arena.

INQUIRER Entertainment was at the Grand Boulevard Hotel when the housemates started checking in on Friday. They had been stripped of their cell phones and were not allowed to leave their rooms which were also stripped of telephone and TV set.

"I will miss my kids most," confessed Vasquez, who maintains a long distance relationship with his sons who live with his mother in Iloilo. "I usually call them on the cell every night, and we say our prayers together. Now, I can't even do that."

Bovick admitted that she would miss her lover, actor Maceda. "I'll miss having sex, sure," she said in Filipino. "But that's okay."

"Y-Speak" host Gonzales said she wouldn't miss boyfriend director Lino Cayetano as much as she would miss family. She also said she would miss her cell phone.

Marudo said he would miss going to the malls and being with his family and friends. "I'd probably quit if it gets to me," he confessed.

For Barcelo, quitting was not an option. "I joined the contest to win," declared the singer, who also made it to the finals of a Hollywood talent search show.

Her sense of adventure would keep Calina, ABS-CBN Cebu talk show host, in the show. "This is something new for me," she said. "But I'd miss my daughter Aira most."

Reeves was looking forward to the solace of being holed up in the PBB house. "I am also looking forward to the P1-million cash that I might win," she admitted.

Pratts tried to get some much-needed sleep as soon as he entered his room at about 7 p.m. Friday. "I haven't slept since Monday," he said.

Pratts had to finish all his commitments first before entering the PBB house.

Fashion designer and Store for All Seasons co-owner Dulce also lacked sleep. She had to stay up most of Friday night to finish hats a customer had ordered from her.

Marabiles planned on reading a book on how to preserve indigenous culture, his own advocacy for Samar.

"We have a rich tradition and I want to preserve that," said the front man of the reggae band Jr. Kilat, whose song, "M-16," was named Song of the Year in the 2005 NU Rock Awards.

They don't know it yet, but a tough life awaits celebrity housemates inside Big Brother's house.

According to Dyogi, the theme for the celebrity edition of PBB is back to basics.

"We would be keeping everything down to the bare essentials," he said. "That's why it's tougher this time."

Who will tough it out?

We'll know in the next few weeks as the real life drama unfolds on television sets nationwide, every night until April on ABS-CBN's Channel 2 and 23, and on cable TV.

Cardinal Vidal set to retire

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE COUNTRY'S ONLY ACTIVE CARDINAL and one of the Catholic Church's most enigmatic leaders is set to retire tomorrow.

Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, the Archbishop of Cebu, will reach his mandatory retirement age of 75.

By tradition, he is expected to submit a letter to the Vatican informing Pope Benedict XVI of his retirement.

But this doesn't necessarily mean that Vidal would have to immediately vacate his post. He would have to stay on until a replacement has been appointed.

The late Jaime Cardinal Sin, for instance, left the Archdiocese of Manila only the year after he formally wrote then Pope John Paul II about his retirement.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) yesterday said it usually took the Vatican's Congregation for Bishops eight to nine months to choose a replacement.

Vidal's retirement will leave the Philippines with no active cardinal. Jose Cardinal Sanchez is 86 and is currently based at the Roman Curia.

The Catholic hierarchy is still awaiting the elevation of Sin's successor, Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, to the College of Cardinals.

In the Philippines, the red hat is usually given to the Archbishops of Manila and Cebu.

Vidal would be leaving an important archdiocese which is second only to the Metropolitan See of Manila in terms of jurisdiction, according to Archbishop Oscar Cruz, a Canon Law expert.

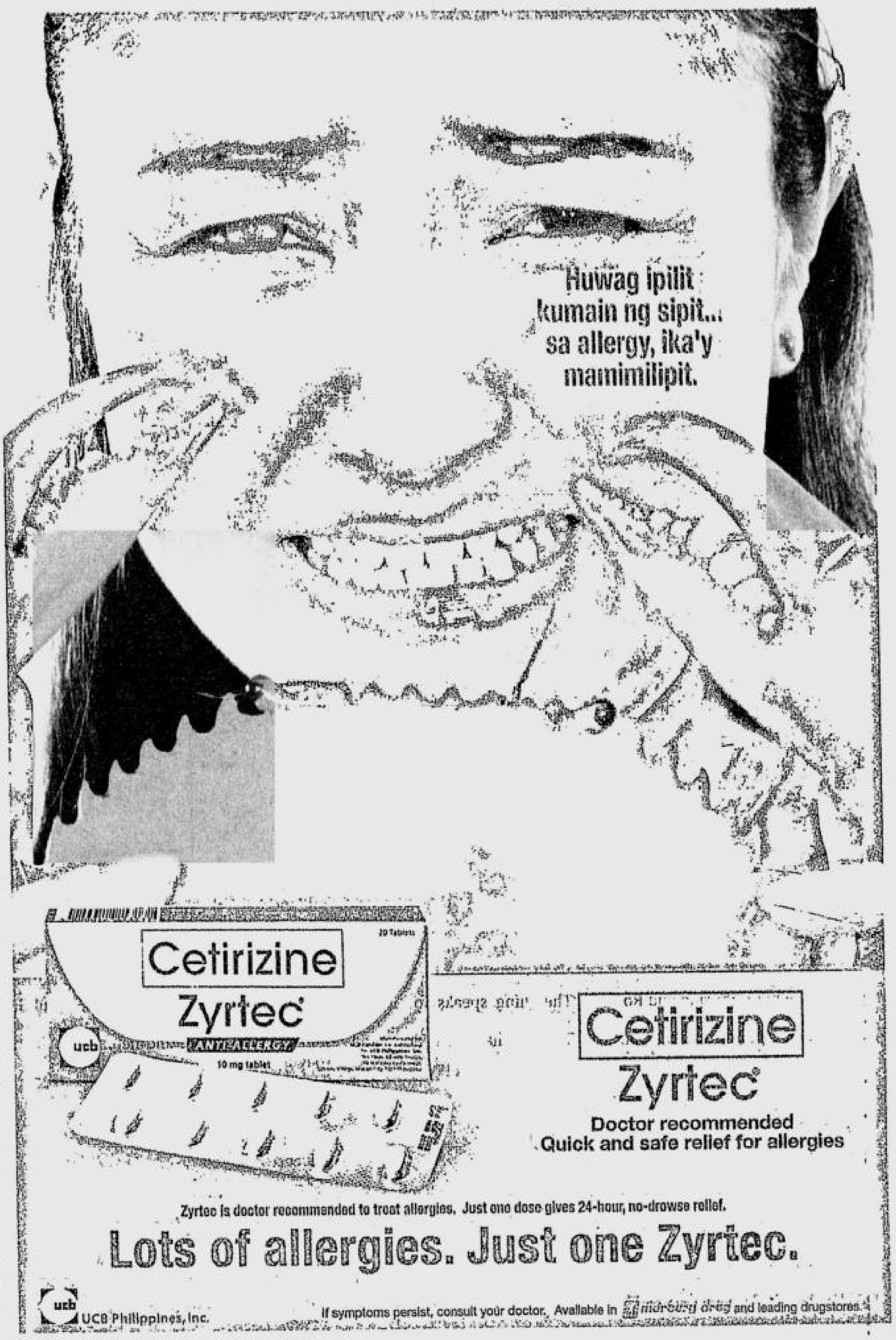
Vidal has been Cebu's archbishop for more than 20 years.

When Sin was still alive, Vidal, being the only other active cardinal, was often compared to the outspoken and charismatic Archbishop of Manila.

The soft-spoken Vidal was also referred to as the "other" cardinal, apparently due to his supposed second-fiddle status to Sin in the Catholic hierarchy.

Veteran Vatican watcher John Allen Jr., in his book "Conclave," described Vidal as someone "said to be modest, deeply spiritual, and very safe on doctrinal issues."

Vidal's character, he wrote, seemed to serve as a counter-balance to the more prominent status of Sin, a key player in the first Edsa uprising that toppled the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and in the Edsa II which ousted former President Joseph Estrada.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Customs speeds up shipment releases

THE BUREAU OF Customs will launch today the European Union-funded Trade Related Technical Assistance program (TRTA), which aims to speed up the release of shipments, assist exporters and impose the correct amount of taxes.

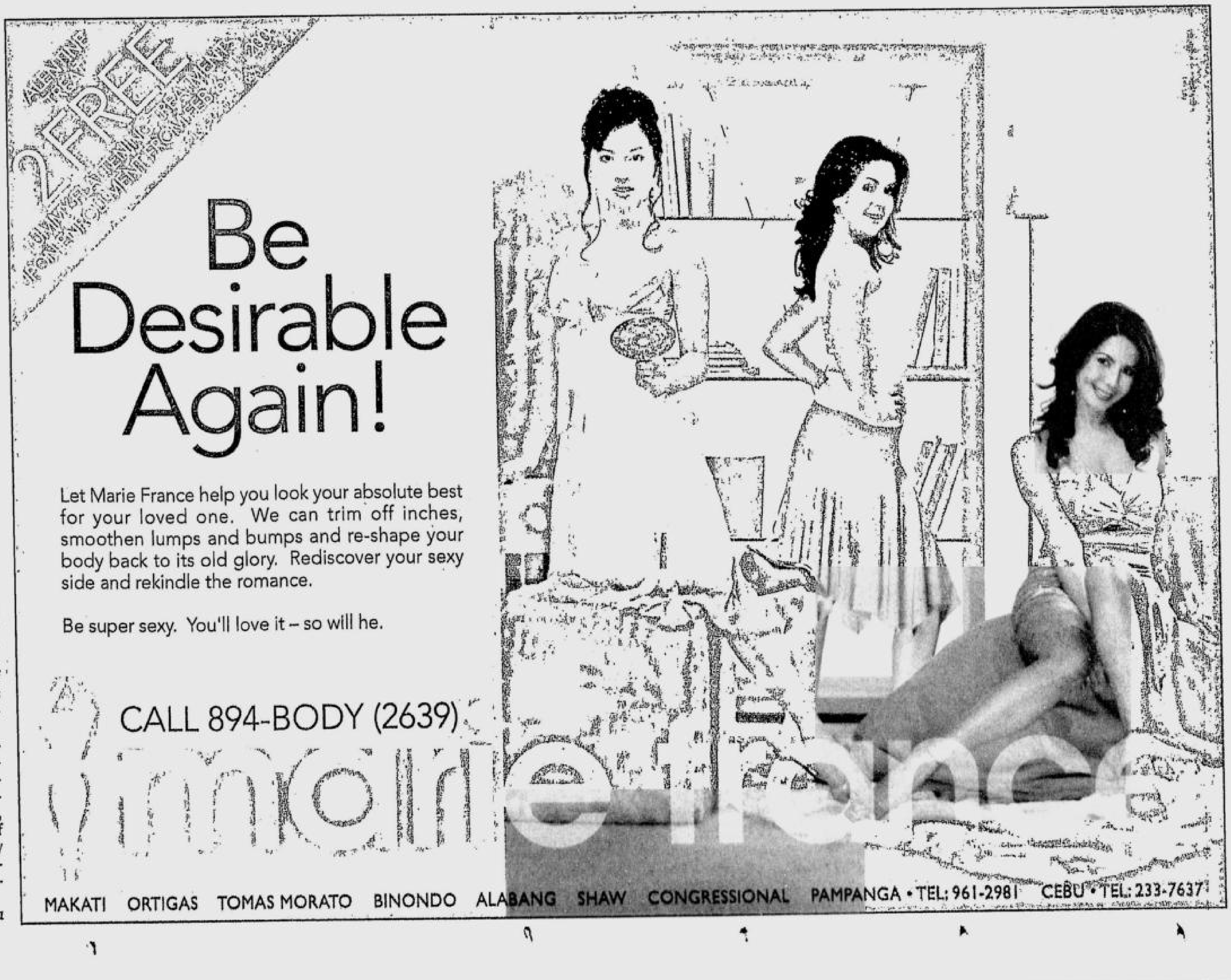
The launch will coincide with the bureau's 104th anniversary.

The TRTA program is funded by a 3.5-million euro grant, of which 1.5 million euros will go to the BOC's trade facilitation activities.

It aims to assist authorities enhance the conditions for international trade and investment and improve the access of Philippine products to the European market.

The other government agencies involved in the program are the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Trade and Industry and the National Economic and Development Authority.

Leila B. Salaverria



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North Cotabato elderly dies with her dream

From page A1

ta Avenue in Quezon City to claim her body.

But they were at a loss as to how to bring her back to North Cotabato.

"Until now, we still don't know how to bring her back to Kapayuran, Pigcawayan," said De la Vega's daughter, Rosal Cabatian, who is staying in Bagbag, Novaliches, Quezon City.

"An ABS-CBN official promised to shoulder everything from hospital expenses to the funeral arrangements, but it's not clear if transportation expenses are included," said Merlita de Juan, who had accompanied De la Vega.

Most of the 27 victims brought to Arlington lived in Metro Manila, posing no problem in transporting them to the site of their wake.

Cabatian, a mother of three, said she did not know De la Vega was going to Wowowee's anniversary.

"Had I known, I wouldn't have allowed her. I knew many people would be there, and it would be dangerous for someone her age," she said.

"She was about to go home to Mindanao, hoping she could win something," De Juan said.

Crush of people

She recalled how the crush of people, who had all rushed to the gate when it was opened at 6 a.m., caused them to tumble to the floor, with those in the back toppling all over them.

"It was a free-for-all. They kept pushing until we fell over those in front of us. I was even pinching the feet of those who were stepping on us," De Juan said.

When it was all over, De Juan, who suffered minor bruises and scratches, found De la Vega dead in a crumpled heap on the floor.

"To be fair to ABS-CBN, they paid all my hospital expenses and medical bills at Rizal Medical Center in Pasig," De Juan said.

"I can't really blame them because it was a tragedy. But my only complaint is that the management should have prepared better security, or no one would have died," she said.

At Arlington's waiting area, ABS-CBN staff and volunteers took care of the injured and their families, bringing them food and drinks.

Poor bore brunt

Booths were also set up by Smart and Globe providing free calls for the victims' families.

Elizabeth Binas, a diabetic in her 60s, was another of those who had lined up with thousands of other poor Filipinos—many waiting for days—to enter the arena.

But jostling at the arena's side gate turned tragic as the crowd rushed to obtain raffle tickets and seats, setting off the deadly stampede.

Within minutes, Binas was dead, her body lying on a stadium road with other corpses among sandals, shoes, water jugs, umbrellas, torn clothes and a Bible.

As in the past, the poor bore the brunt of the disaster.

"We are poor people, that's why we went—to take our chances," said Susan Lagare, who had lined up since Friday night with her daughter and two neighbors.

Regretting she came, Lagare said: "I'd rather now eat rice and salt than lose my life."

Shock and disbelief

Shocked relatives visited hospital morgues, checking corpses wrapped in white cloth in search of loved ones who hadn't returned home.

Binas' daughter, Arlyn, found her corpse beside her grieving sister and broke down. She slapped her sister across the face, shouting: "Why did you allow Mommy to go there?" She tugged in disbelief at her mother's body and wailed.

Elmer Bolano found his mother's body on a morgue floor and wept. Hoping to revive her, he pressed his hands repeatedly on her chest, but then gave up, weeping again.

Bolano said he and his siblings tried to discourage their mother from going to the show with friends, but she insisted.

"We were looking for good luck but we were met by tragedy instead," said Neldren Catubig, a 30-year-old former waiter who had waited in line since Friday. He spoke at a hospital where he was being treated for leg injuries.

Catubig said he and others wanted to get a raffle ticket and be among the first to get into the stadium.

Survivors

The huge crowd waiting by the side gate grew impatient and started to shove those in front, Catubig recounted. A rope used to tie the gate shut snapped and a wave of people surged forward, stumbling over each other, their legs getting caught in the railings of steel barriers behind the gate, he said.

Teresita "Tessie" de Ocampo, 68, a dressmaker, and eldest son Tomas, 47, an occasional driver, were among four Wowowee followers who left their homes in Barangay Paciano, Calamba City, Friday afternoon for the PhilSports Arena.

They thought they could earn some money to repair their dilapidated house by the river.

Mother and son, and two other unidentified companions, were among those lucky enough to get tickets for entry to the noontime show. They were also among those spared from being killed by the stampede that ensued even before the show was to deliver on its promise of luck to its aficionados. *With reports from Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, and AP*

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Puno takes over DILG; Andaya to DBM

From page A1

text message: "(I) will just make the announcement as and when they are made."

The previous day, Malacañang announced the appointment of Reyes as environment secretary, Dr. Estrella Cabral as social welfare secretary, Michael Defensor as presidential chief of staff, and Edgardo Pamintuan as chair of the Subic-Clark Development Area Council.

Defensor vacated the DENR.

Reyes was initially offered the post of ambassador to the United States, but he reportedly turned it down.

Through a spokesperson, Puno thanked the President for the appointment.

It was only the other day that people close to the President had told him he was going to be appointed to the top DILG post, Puno said.

Last month, he told reporters in Malacañang when he attended the Council of State meeting that reports of his appointment to the DILG were just rumors and that he preferred to stay in the House.

Handcuffs deal

Puno said he would first consult with various agencies under the department before submitting an action plan to the President. He headed the DILG for two years until 2001 when Joseph Estrada was ousted from Malacañang.

During his stint as head of the DILG during the Estrada administration, Puno was linked to three anomalous deals—the Motorola, Mahogany and handcuffs deals.

The P200-million Motorola deal allegedly involved the awarding of the contract for phases 4 and 5 of the communication project to his relatives.

The P16-million handcuffs deal involved the alleged overprice of 41,297 pairs of handcuffs, while the P7.2-million Mahogany deal was in connection with the awarding of the exclusive right to conduct drug testing on police officers to Mahogany Medical and Pharmaceutical.

In a phone interview, Andaya expressed surprise over his appointment, saying he did not expect the announcement yesterday.

He acknowledged though that Ms Arroyo had asked him a few months ago whether he was interested in becoming the DBM chief.

Andaya said he told the President he was willing to join her Cabinet. But he said he would need a week to wrap up things in the House before moving to his new post.

Temporary

This Wednesday, Andaya is scheduled to sponsor on the floor the proposed and much-delayed P1.05-trillion national budget for 2006.

For his part, Neri said his return to Neda was something he had agreed with the President.

He said in a phone interview that he only agreed to take the DBM post as a temporary position, after former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin resigned with other members of the so-called "Hyatt 10" in July last year.

Consolidate

The Hyatt 10 resigned en masse amid allegations that Ms Arroyo cheated in the last presidential election. The group also asked Ms Arroyo to step down.

The appointments are part of the President's efforts to consolidate her official family after the resignation of the Hyatt 10.

In September last year, administration members of the House defeated an impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo in connection with her alleged rigging of the polls and other charges. The opposition is expected to file another impeachment complaint this year.

Three House leaders supported the transfer of Reyes to the DENR, saying he was the right man for stopping illegal logging and mining in the country and for providing ample protection to the environment.

Representatives Jesli Lapus, Edwin Uy and Joel Mayo Almario said Reyes' proven leadership in the anticrime drive would boost the DENR campaign against environmental destruction.

The lawmakers also lauded the appointment of Cabral, a cardiologist, to the the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

"Cabral's experience as former Philippine Heart Center director also gives her an edge in dealing with government bureaucracy and ensuring public health system better utilized for social welfare role," said Lapus, chair of the House committee on ways and means.

The changes in the Cabinet, however, signals another reorganization in the House of Representatives.

As part of the midterm-sharing agreement struck at the beginning of the 13th Congress in July 2004, Ms Arroyo's economic adviser, Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, will replace Andaya.

Rep. Herminio Teves is supposed to assume Lapus' post, and Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, the post of Majority Leader Prospero Nograles. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

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Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A19 misstated the place where people on Friday formed long queues outside for free tickets to the first anniversary presentation of the popular noontime show, "Wowowee." The complete name of the venue is Philippine Sports Commission-Philippine National Institute of Sports complex (formerly Ultra), not the Philippine Sports Commission.

DENR statement clearing Lafayette hit

SORSOGON CITY—VARIOUS SECTORS assailed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for virtually clearing Lafayette Mining Company of any responsibility for the toxic spill in Rapu-Rapu, Albay.

Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes criticized the DENR saying "instead of protecting the environment and the people, they protect the mining company."

The DENR earlier declared that the mercury found around Rapu-Rapu could have come from active volcanoes like Mayon Volcano, and the natural evaporation of bodies of water.

Bastes said the DENR's statement tends to undermine the task of the probe body which President Macapagal-Arroyo has formed.

The probe body will look into every aspect of Lafayette's operation, including the chemical contamination, he stressed. *Bobby Labalan and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.: PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, February 6, 2006
5th Week in Ordinary Time
Pedro Bautista, Paul Miki & Companions

1st Reading:	1 K 8:1-7, 9-13
Gospel:	Mark 6:53-56

Having crossed the lake, Jesus and his disciples came ashore at Gennesaret where they tied up the boat. As soon as they landed, people recognized Jesus and ran to spread the news throughout the countryside. Wherever he was they brought to him the sick lying on their mats. And wherever he went, to villages, towns or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplace and begged him to let them touch just the fringe of his cloak. And all who touched him were cured.

Commentary

Solomon dedicates the temple with the entire community, bringing the ark of the covenant that holds the law, into the presence of the sanctuary. A cloud fills the temple and God dwells with his people. Where does our God dwell now among us?

Mark tells us that Jesus steps out of the boat and into the midst of the crowd that brings the sick to him. He is swamped by people in villages and towns, crossroads, the marketplace, where all beg to be able to touch even the tassel of his cloak, seeking wholeness and life. Where do we look for our God—among the poor, the sick, the hungry, the dispossessed, on the roadways?

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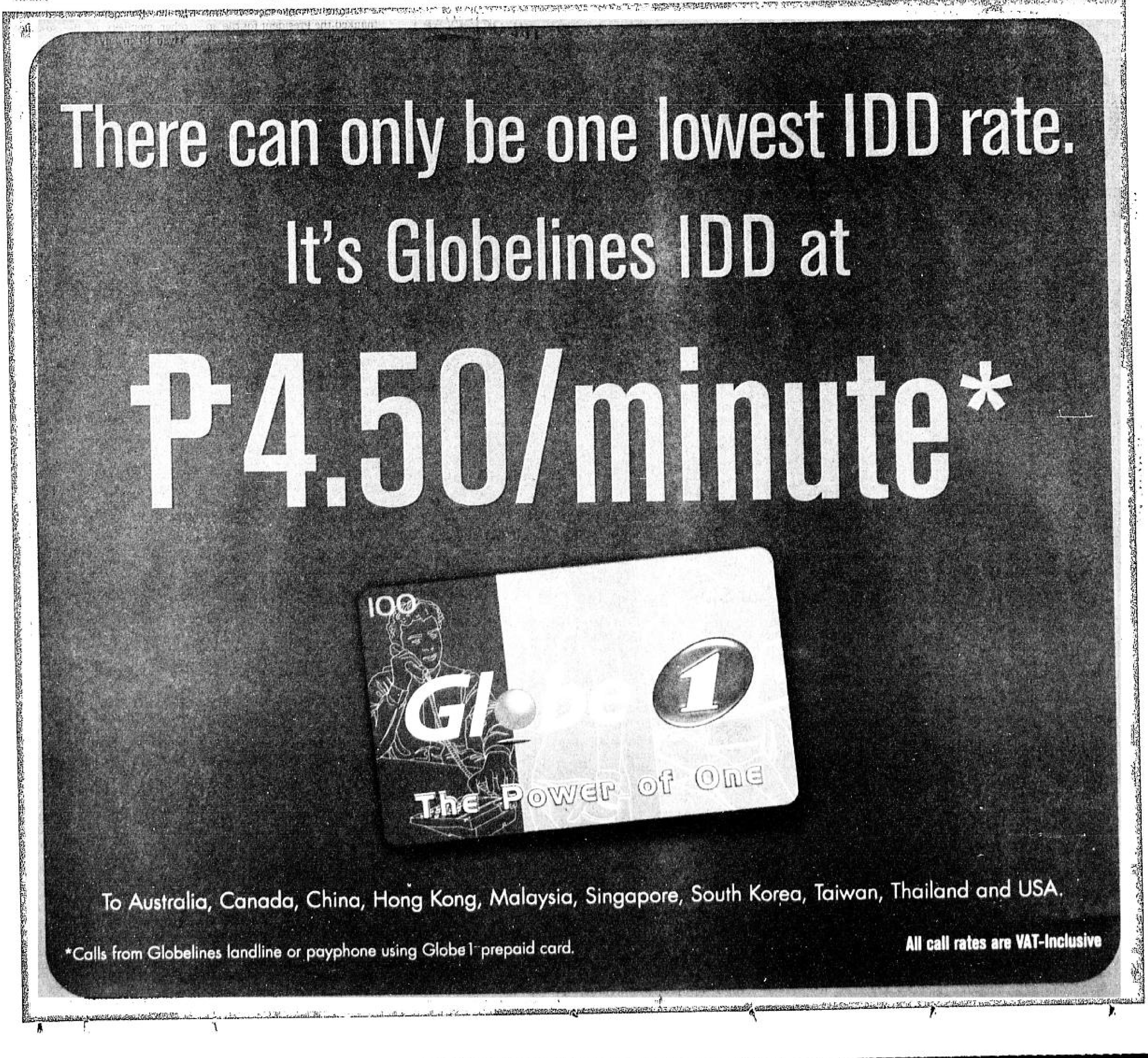

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Because we Filipinos enjoy sports, it has, time and time again, served as a unifying factor for our people as when all of us cheered for our champion Manny Pacquiao. It is therefore undeniable that the tradition of sports nurtured by organizations such as the PRISAA is a practice that all of us must not only enjoy, but more over, support as it is the breeding ground of future champions for our nation.

H.E. GLORIA M. MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

As the largest CHED-accredited nationwide sports association in the Philippines, PRISAA is very thankful to the 400 active member-universities and colleges across the 16 regions for their continuing cooperation and confidence in us. Appreciation is also due to our sponsors for their unwavering support to our cause. This years national games would not have also been possible without the hospitality of Dagupan City's government and the able leadership of PRISAA Region I.

Dr. EMMANUEL Y. ANGELES
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The PRISAA National Games has finally found its way to Pangasinan in the spirit of fostering friendship among all private schools across the nation and in the spirit and hope of discovering the next generation of athletes who shall bring home greater pride for us Filipinos in the sphere of international sports.

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GONZALO T. DUQUE, L.I.B. Ed.D.
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On behalf of the House of Representatives, I convey my support to the PRISAA, its athletes and officials alike and urge all 19 regional delegations to exert every effort possible to reach its objectives. The PRISAA has vast and youthful potentials: some 4,000 athletes, coaches and team officials in the Games. Given its tradition, I am sure that PRISAA has richly given its share to national sports development.

Hon. JOSE C. DE VENECIA
Speaker, House of Representatives
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Congratulations to the officers and organizers of PRISAA Region I. I am sure that you shall promote not only physical excellence but also self-discipline, sportsmanship, goodwill and brotherhood among the participants.

With the holding of the PRISAA National Games here in Pangasinan, we hope to discover new heroes in the field of sports who would be at par with our competitors in international sports.

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Encyclical reexamines role of state, Church

From page A1

ing signaled by the encyclical concerning the relationship between the Church and State.

The bishops' statement noted the encyclical's citation of St. Augustine's observation that "a State which is not governed according to justice would be just a bunch of thieves."

The bishops developed their critique of the Arroyo administration on the basis of this particular citation by the encyclical.

The papal encyclical, addressed to "men and women religious and all the lay faithful," begins with a reference to love as "one of the most frequently used and misused of words" and sought to distinguish "eros," or erotic love, from "agape," or spiritual love.

But it is the second part of the encyclical—"The Practice of Love by the Church as a Community of Love"—that should concern Filipino bishops who are confused about their role in politics.

This article focuses on the second part of the encyclical without downgrading the importance of the first part.

Astonishing

Vatican observers have found the emphasis of the encyclical on love "unexpected and even astonishing." Rocco Palmo, a Vatican-based commentator, writes about the "surprising message" behind "God is Love."

According to the commentary, the encyclical "may raise eyebrows among liberal and conservatives alike. Joseph Ratzinger was never going to be the Pope of conventional wisdom. His April election as Pope Benedict XVI was greeted with shock, suspicion and (occasionally) downright revulsion among both Catholics and non-Catholics.

"Many observers were puzzled at the choice of Ratzinger, who for years was Catholicism's 'bad cop' in defending controversial Church teachings. But the reserved successor to John Paul II is a man of many surprises. The former doctrinal enforcer has just released his first major papal document and instead of being a harsh condemnation, the encyclical is an uplifting treatise on love's place at the center of Christian and Catholic life."

An insightful comment comes from the editorial of "The Press" in Christchurch, New Zealand: "There is little sign of God's rottweiler in Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical, a surprising insightful and sensitive treatise on the nature of love that has caused many to rethink their opinion of the new Pontiff."

Der Spiegel, the influential Germany newsmagazine, writes of the encyclical: "Some had expected a treatise on the dangers of moral relativism. Others thought the new Pontiff's first encyclical would focus on the pitfalls of the modern world. But love? Pope Benedict XVI tells all.

"It's dozens of pages long, reminiscent of a university thesis and complete with references to Nietzsche and Marx. But the document, clear, easy to understand and powerful, is Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical.

"It is entitled, 'Deus Caritas Est' (God is Love). In a world where the name of God is sometimes associated with vengeance or even a duty of hatred and violence, this message is both timely and significant. It's the document's only reference to Islamism and terrorism. The rest is about love, love, and more love."

More about detail

Der Spiegel notes that the former Cardinal Ratzinger could have written about the dangers of globalization, about genetic engineering, about Darwinism or about his "dictatorship of relativism, (but) this Pope cares more about detail than about publicity. He is more concerned with establishing truth than he is about creating spectacles. Benedict XVI would rather write about love."

On charity and the Church, according to Der Spiegel, the function of the Church is charitable activity—caritas. It points out that "ministry is the Church's core competency."

It cites the encyclical: "In today's complex situation, not least because of the growth of globalized economy, the Church's social doctrine has become a set of fundamental guidelines."

The encyclical further says the Church "cannot and must not take upon itself the political battle," rather it must constantly be a reminder to the state of justice—"both the aim and the intrinsic criterion of all politics."

In what seems to be a rebuke to Marxist-style economy, the encyclical says: "We do not need a state which regulates and controls everything, but a state which, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, generously acknowledges and supports initiatives arising from the different social forces and combines spontaneity with closeness to those in need."

Rejecting Marxist criticism that argues that Catholic charity is nothing more than "alms giving" that subverts the pursuit of justice, the Pope wrote that the Church would always be compelled to practice charity, "especially in a world that is shrinking but where poverty is growing. It is work that must be independent of ideology and refrain from proselytizing."

The encyclical says: "The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the state. Yet, at the same time, she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice." *(To be continued)*

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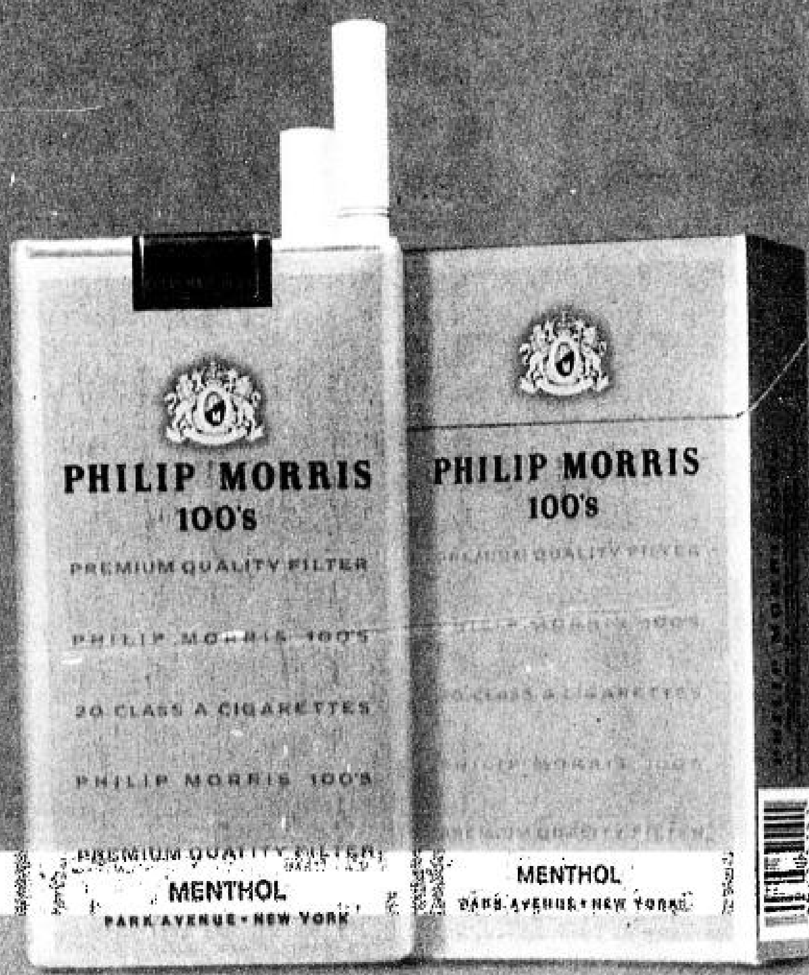

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Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Iran still defiant after vote to report it to UN Council

TEHRAN—DEFIANT IRAN VOWED TO END SNAP UN NUCLEAR checks on Sunday, a day after the UN atomic watchdog voted to report the Islamic Republic to the Security Council over concerns about its nuclear program.

Ramping up the rhetoric against Tehran, US President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the vote sent a "clear message" to Iran.

"This important step sends a clear message to the regime in Iran that the world will not permit the Iranian regime to gain nuclear weapons," Bush said.

But Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad retorted such pressure could do nothing to deflect the world's fourth biggest oil producer from nuclear power, which Tehran insists it needs for electricity, not for weapons.

"Our enemies cannot do a damn thing. We do not need you at all. But you are in need of the Iranian nation," he said.

Iran has warned that any sanctions against it would send oil prices beyond a level industrialized economies could manage.

The International Atomic Energy Agency voted on Saturday to report Iran to the Security Council. But the top UN body will take no action, including possibly imposing sanctions, until an IAEA report on Iran is delivered in March.

The only way Tehran could avoid Security Council action, US ambassador to the IAEA Gregory Schulte said, was to halt nuclear fuel enrichment and continue letting IAEA inspectors to conduct snap checks of Iranian nuclear sites.

But instead of giving in to the latest rebuke from the West, Iran said it would no longer abide by the so-called Additional Protocol it signed in 2003 under pressure from the West allowing for snap inspections.

Iran signed the protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty after saying it had carried out secret atomic work for 18 years.

Germany, France and Britain, the "EU3," initiated the IAEA resolution to report Iran but concrete Security Council action is likely to come slowly, if at all.

There are stubborn divisions among its five permanent members—themselves nuclear powers—over possible sanctions against Iran.

Beijing and Moscow, keen to preserve energy trade with Iran, oppose moves towards punitive sanctions, raising the risk of the Iranian nuclear issue stalling in the Security Council.

The United States, Britain and France complete the five.

Iran also has plans to resume full-scale uranium enrichment in response to being sent to the UN Security Council. But the timing of this move remains uncertain.

"This is a technical issue, we will announce it when the time comes," foreign ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi told a news conference in Tehran on Sunday. *Reuters*

Captain abandoned doomed ferry

SAFAGA, EGYPT—SURVIVORS OF THE RED Sea ferry disaster said on Saturday the Egyptian captain had fled his burning ship by lifeboat and abandoned them to their fate, as hopes faded of finding some 800 missing people.

Some passengers, plucked alive from the sea or from boats after the ferry caught fire and sank early on Friday, said crew members had told them not to worry about the blaze below deck and even ordered them to take off lifejackets.

An official at el-Salam Maritime Transport Company, which owned the Al Salam 98, said the captain, named as Sayyed Omar, was still unaccounted for. The company would issue a written statement on the disaster later on Saturday, he added.

Rescue workers have recovered 195 bodies from the Red Sea and saved 400 people, but about 800 more, most of them Egyptian workers returning from Saudi Arabia, are missing.

The director of the Red Sea Ports Authority, Maj. Gen. Mahfouz Taha, said 378 survivors had come ashore on the Egyptian side. The Saudi authorities said they had picked up 22.

Survivors said a fire broke out below deck shortly after the 35-year-old vessel left the Saudi port of Duba on Thursday evening with 1,272 passengers and a crew of about 100.

The ship began to list but the crew continued to sail out into the Red Sea rather than turn back to the Saudi port, they told reporters in the Egyptian port of Safaga, where the ferry should have landed early on Friday.

Egyptian survivor Shahata Ali said the passengers had told the captain about the fire but he told them not to worry.

"We were wearing lifejackets but they told us there was nothing wrong, told us to take them off and they took away the lifejackets. Then the boat started to sink and the captain took a boat and left," he added, speaking to Reuters Television.

"The captain was the first to leave and we were surprised to see the boat sinking," added Khaled Hassan, another survivor.

Other survivors told similar stories. *Reuters*

Bush spying finds few suspects—Post

WASHINGTON—NEARLY ALL OF THE THOUSANDS of Americans subjected to a domestic surveillance program authorized by President George W. Bush have been dismissed as potential suspects, the Washington Post said on Sunday.

The Bush administration says the surveillance, conducted by the National Security Agency without a warrant, helps defend the United States against terror attacks. Critics say it violates the rights of Americans by eavesdropping on telephone conversations.

According to the newspaper, intelligence officers heard nothing suspicious in the calls and saw no reason to suspect most of the people of improper activity, according to current and former government officials and sources in the private sector familiar with the technology being used.

Each year, fewer than 10 US citizens or residents spark enough interest during the surveillance to cause monitoring of domestic phone calls as well, according to an authoritative account, the newspaper said.

Two sources said thousands of people in the past four years have had their telephone conversation recorded or e-mails read by intelligence analysts. *Reuters*

FRIEDAN in May 7, 2000 photo. AP

US feminist pioneer Betty Friedan dies

WASHINGTON—BETTY Friedan, whose 1963 book "The Feminine Mystique" helped inspire the modern feminist movement and who co-founded the National Organization for Women, died on Saturday on her 85th birthday, a relative said.

Friedan died at her home in Washington of congestive heart failure, just before 3 p.m., her cousin Emily Bazelon said.

"For Betty, feminism was an aspect of humanism. And one of her sons said this morning that she demonstrated that sheer intelligence could trump lack of intelligence," Bazelon said.

"Betty Friedan was a giant for women's rights," said former National Organization for Women president Eleanor Smeal, now head of the Feminist Majority Foundation.

"She faced ridicule, scorn, anger, and personal denigration, but she never faltered in her advocacy for fundamental changes to improve the lives of women," Smeal said in a statement.

Friedan was born Bettye Naomi Goldstein in Peoria, Illinois, and attended Smith College, a leading women's college in Massachusetts, where she edited a campus paper and graduated with honors in 1942. She attended the University of California, Berkeley for a year before working as a journalist. In 1947, she married Carl Friedan, a marriage that lasted 20 years and produced three children.

"The Feminine Mystique" emerged from an article about a survey she conducted of fellow graduates at Smith and focused on the restrictions on women of the role of full-time homemaker. It became a best-seller and helped invigorate the women's movement and US feminism.

Friedan co-founded the National Organization for Women, or NOW, with Pauli Murray, the first African-American female Episcopal priest and served as the women's advocacy group's first president from 1966 to 1970.

She also helped found Naral, originally the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws.

Current NOW President Kim Gandy said Friedan's "Feminine Mystique" book "opened women's eyes. *Reuters*

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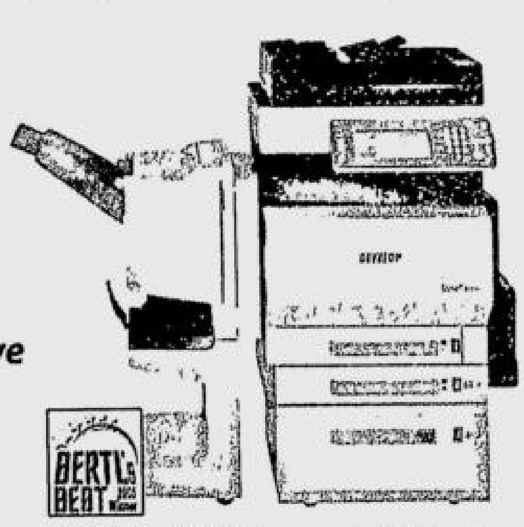

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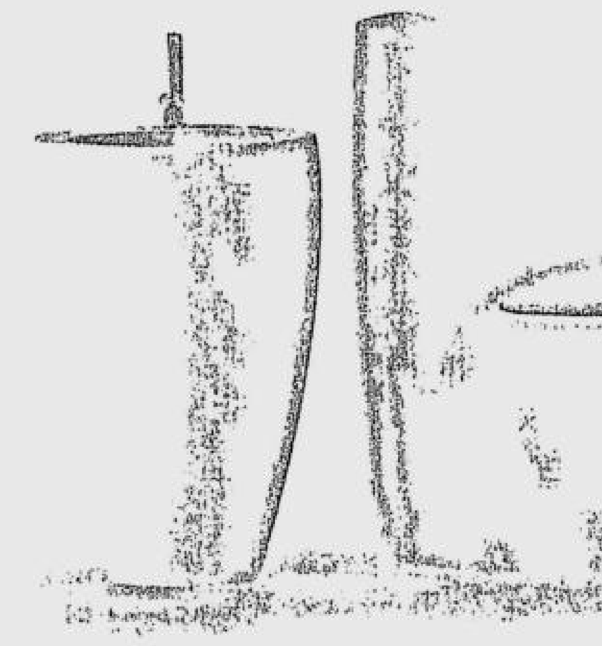

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Thaksin rejects quit calls, says protesters 'stupid'

REUTERS

ANTI-THAKSIN protester in Bangkok Feb. 4.

BANGKOK—THAI PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra urged his supporters to ignore "stupid" protesters Sunday, even as his rivals declared their mass antigovernment rally a victory and vowed to stage new demonstrations.

"These are just a few stupid people. Let's ignore them," Thaksin said of the protesters as he visited his hometown in northern Thailand.

"I am not stupid. I will work to the best of my ability to make Thai people happy," he said.

But Thaksin's rivals declared their marathon 18-hour weekend rally a victory, having drawn 50,000 people at its night-time peak to demand Thaksin's resignation over alleged corruption.

"This is just the beginning," media mogul Sondhi Limthongkul, Thaksin's leading critic, told thousands as the protest ended early Sunday.

"This is a victory, because we managed to deliver our petition" to the king's official representative and to Army Commander Gen. Sonthi Boonyaratglin, a hoarse and weary Sondhi said.

The 58-year-old said he would organize another rally next Saturday "to close Thaksin's account." Protesters have accused Thaksin of using his political power to boost his business dealings.

The protest marked one of Thaksin's greatest challenges since he took office five years ago and reflected public anger at his family's sale of Shin Corp.—the telecom giant founded by the premier—to Singapore's state-owned investment firm Temasek.

His family managed to avoid paying tax on the $1.9 billion earned from the sale, sparking a public outcry and an investigation by regulators.

The anti-Thaksin camp was boosted by the resignation of Technology Minister Sora-at Klinpratum, who announced he was stepping down Saturday.

The surprise move came one day after the culture minister suddenly quit, saying she wanted to maintain "political ethics." Both belong to the same faction within Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai (Thais Love Thais) party. *AFP*

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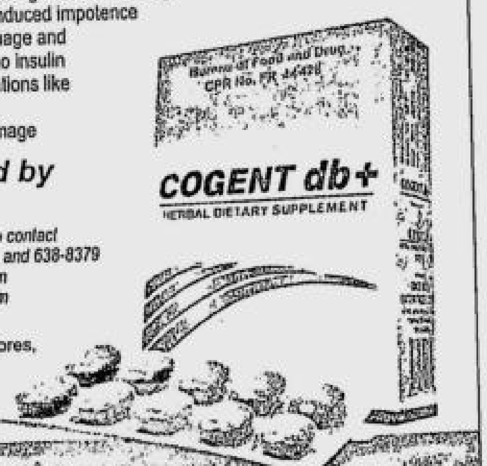

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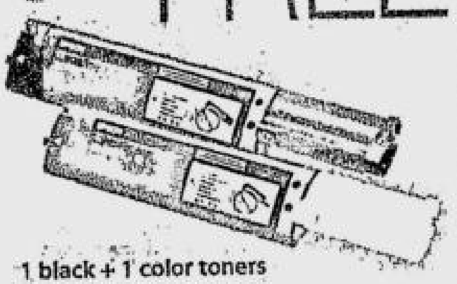

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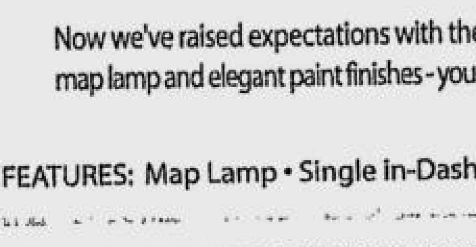

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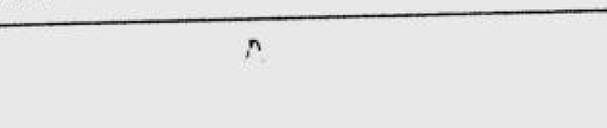

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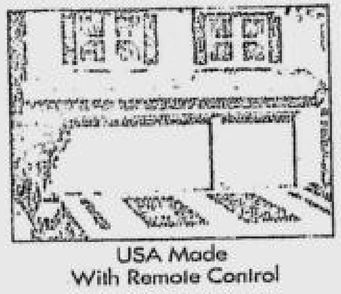

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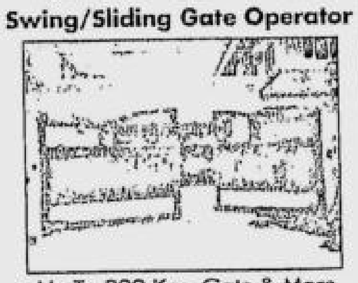

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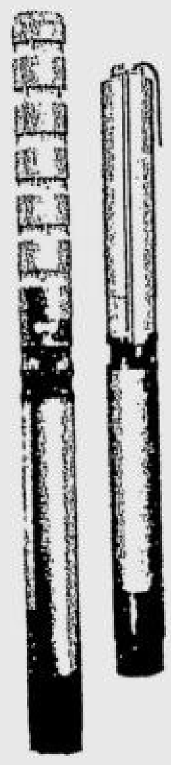

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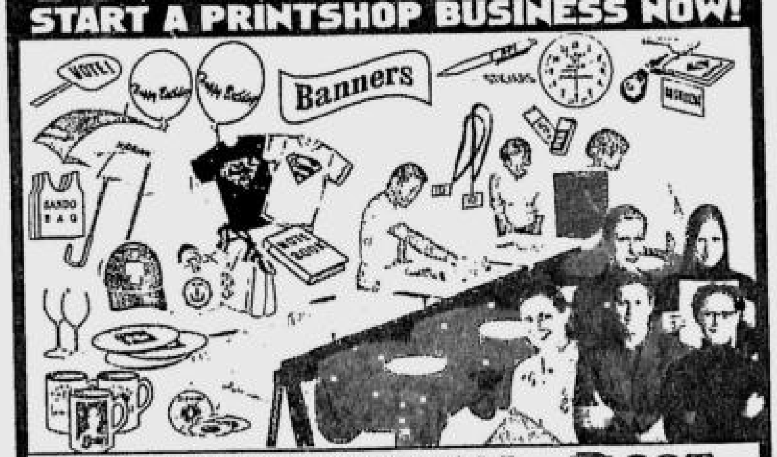

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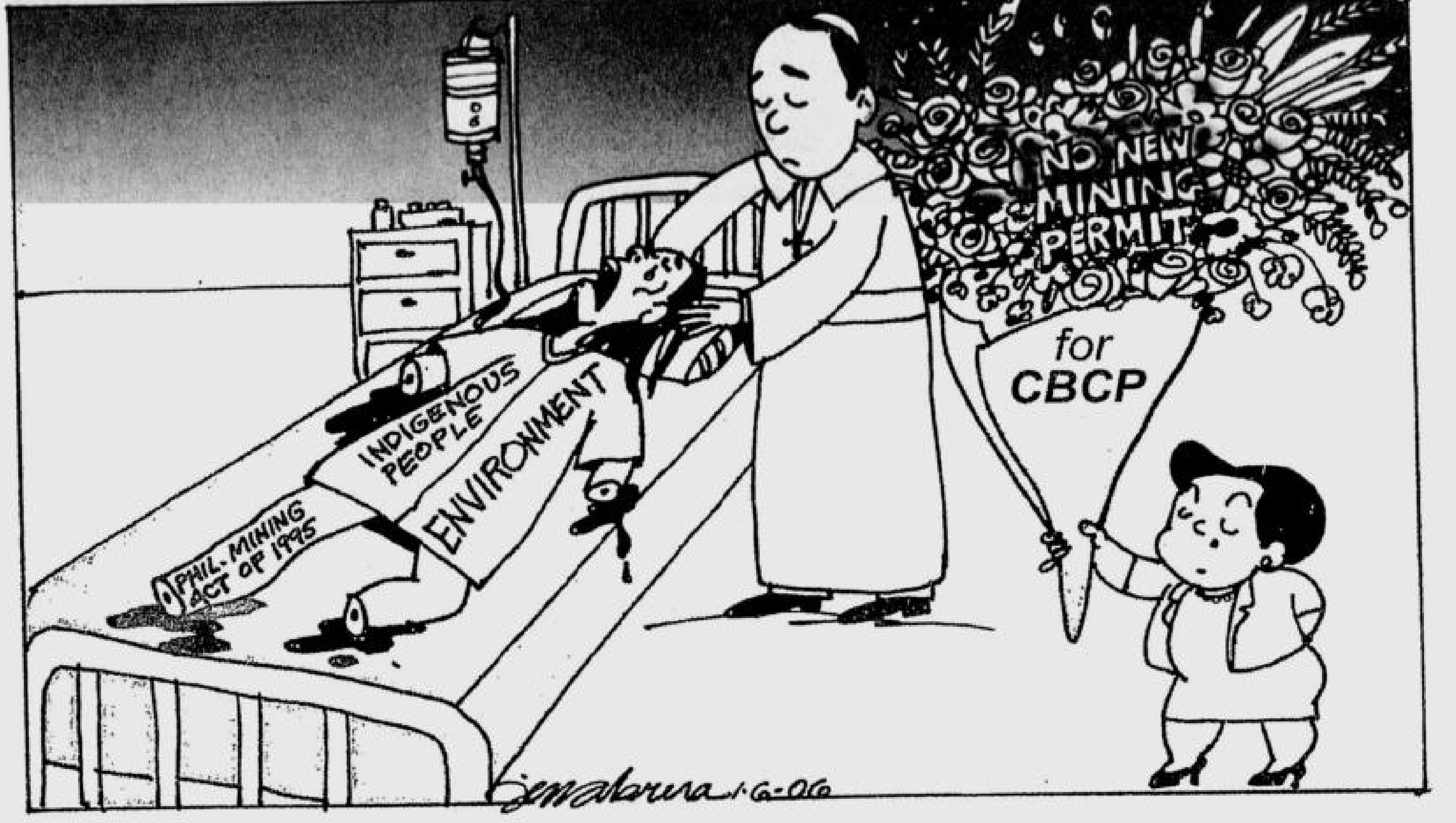


Media and the market

EDITORIAL

OVER THE WEEKEND, SOME 80 JOURNALISTS from different parts of the country met in Clark to discuss the current practice of journalism. In particular, the participants in the third Media Nation summit dwelt on the relationship between the media and the market.

That relationship can best be described as uneasy.

The conference comes at a time when the practice of journalism is under great stress. The killing of Filipino journalists continues, making the Philippines the second most dangerous country for journalists in the world (next only to war-torn Iraq). The forces of technology and convergence continue to place great pressure on the traditional media, transforming audiences (in some cases, even driving them away), or reinventing the relationship between the journalist and the public. The ascendancy of entertainment as the principal content of journalism continues without letup, forcing media organizations to devote less airtime or smaller news holes to hard news, or, worse, lending even greater momentum to the noxious "celebrification" of information. Not least, the conference comes at a time when the very notions of truth and accountability in public life are under attack or simply considered irrelevant.

These changes in the media industry can be summed up in terms of two tendencies: the Yahoo! approach, which seeks to reimagine the ways in which people use information, or the Google effect, which seeks to transcend media precisely by doing away with the function of mediation (Google News aggregates news stories without the help of editors but only through the use of algorithms).

These epochal changes are mirrored in the changes sweeping the market. Tectonic shifts continue to reshape the landscape of advertising, which remains the main source of revenue for media organizations around the world. For instance, the looming consolidation worldwide of the media buying function means that the power and responsibility for investing advertising budgets are shifting to a new and much smaller elite. At the same time, consumers have become much more savvy about their choices; Filipino media users, for example, now expect much higher production values from the TV shows they watch, or shorter and thus more tightly edited stories from the newspapers they read.

In part because of these changes, the relationship between the media and the market is uneasy. To a greater degree than before, there is no such thing as a sure thing.

An advertising innovation started in one part of the world quickly becomes the standard in another—but fails in a third. A hit reality program in Europe becomes a hit reality show in the Philippines—but is a failure in another country. Because the old certainties are no longer there, the market places greater pressure on the media to produce advertising-friendly content and to deliver the audiences the market needs. (Hence the ascendancy of entertainment.)

The unease is not personal; that is to say, journalists and advertisers can get along, and often do, famously. More and more journalists also realize that, in this day and age, a healthy bottom line is the best guarantee of a free press.

But the prominence of the entertainment paradigm does fill a journalist's heart with anxiety; if this is the shape of the future, it is a future where the value of truth is trumped by the (admittedly important and necessary) need to be entertained; a future where the standard of news is diluted by the practice of writing or airing "features"; a future where hard and hard-hitting news may be routinely shelved, for fear of offending advertisers.

Let us be clear: More and more media organizations realize the need for the discipline of the market. More and more media organizations now use focus groups and commission audience surveys. More and more media organizations now think in terms of core competencies and strategic intent.

Still, journalism remains not only a business, but also and primarily a public service. (This is precisely why it enjoys constitutional protection.) The relationship between the media and the market, therefore, **should** be described as uneasy. It should ever be so.

Stampede shows how desperately poor Pinoys are

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE STAMPEDE AT ULTRA, WHERE AT LEAST 74 people died and about 400 others were injured should be an eye-opener for our government officials, especially the President. It is an indication of the extent of poverty in our country. The poor people who flocked to Ultra went there hoping to win a small part of the P1.6 million in cash—not to mention the house and lot, and the car—reportedly set aside to be raffled off during the anniversary show of "Wowowee," ABS-CBN's noontime program.

To the poverty-stricken, such tempting prizes are worth dying for. To many of them, the program is the only way to get hold of some money that, perhaps, could finally set them free from the clutches of poverty.

The horde of poor people started arriving at Ultra, packing its grounds, on Monday. Some of them came from faraway provinces and had money only for one-way fare. They thought they could pay their way back home with what they would win in the raffle. That was how confident, or hopeful, they were.

Many of our officials only pay lip service to poverty eradication. They don't really do something meaningful to achieve that. Others don't believe that poverty is that serious. Now they should know better.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has made a show of visiting the victims in the hospitals and expressing her condolences. She has ordered an investigation and there would surely be some scapegoats afterwards. But those are not enough. She has to do something drastic to ease poverty so that people don't have to die in search of some relief. After all, as some critics say, poverty got this bad during her administration. If we can be honest about it, the blame falls on the policymakers and economic planners in Malacañang who have let the people go this desperately poor.

If the desperately poor people of the Philippines were not so appallingly numerous, not that many would have flocked to Ultra hoping to win some money. And they wouldn't have stampeded in the race to get in and get tickets for the raffle. And nobody would have died.

Perhaps, the mass deaths should shock the administration into doing something meaningful. Distributing free noodles to the poor while cameras click away, delivering speeches, shaking hands and promising billions of pesos for food handouts to try to regain some popularity, are not what we mean by "something meaningful."

The people need jobs, not handouts. They prefer to work for their food. So give them jobs, not handouts, and they would be more grateful. Handouts fill hungry stomachs temporarily, but they strip people of their self-respect. Handouts introduce people to a culture of mendicancy. In time, people would get so used to them, they would rather beg than work for a living.

But alas, this administration knows only one policy: bribery. It is spending many billions of pesos to bribe the military, the police, government employees, local government officials, congressmen, the poor—anybody who can help the President stay in Malacañang where she shouldn't be. None or very little is set aside to generate jobs.

* * *

The value added tax is a good example of this administration's topsy-turvy policies. Other countries also impose VAT, but most of them (e.g., Canada) don't impose VAT on food and medicine because they are basic necessities—for the health and life of the people.

The Philippines exempts some agricultural products in their raw form. The moment they are processed or cooked, they are "Vatable." But the people cannot eat these products raw.

Despite the fact that medicine is already very expensive in the Philippines—often beyond the reach of the poor—it is covered by VAT. Bothered by their conscience, some legislators are now planning to raise the tax exemptions and to reduce the tax rates for low-salaried employees. That's all very well, but that would benefit only those who have salaries. What about those who have none? They still have to pay for the high prices of food and medicine. The more sensible policy would be to exempt food and medicine from additional taxes like the other countries do, and keep the present tax rates and exemptions.

In pushing for the VAT, the administration said the government is bankrupt and needs more revenues. But the administration has embarked on a spending spree. Asked where the money is coming from, it says that it has "savings"—plenty of it, judging from the huge amounts GMA is throwing around. If there are savings to justify the spending binge, then there is no more need to punish the people with higher taxes, *di ba*?

On the Reform VAT (RVAT), the administration says that's an additional of only 2 percentage points and the price increase should therefore be negligible. But that is not the way it is happening.

Some stores, after charging the 10-percent EVAT, collect another 12 percent for the RVAT, instead of just the additional 2 percent. This is happening because of ignorance or greed (profiteering). But what is the government doing about it?

And even if it is only the 2-percent RVAT that is added, the same is tacked on to the goods every step of the way, as the goods move from producer to wholesaler to distributor to retailer. So, instead of only 2 percent being added to the prices of goods, the additional RVAT goes up by 8 percent or more.

Moreover, the higher transportation cost is also tacked on to the goods' prices. Note that oil prices have also increased because of the EVAT and RVAT which have raised as much the cost of electricity, another input that has added to the cost of production.

Again, what is the government doing about this?

Tragedy

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A SCENE STRAIGHT from a war, a killer earthquake, or a landslide in a far-flung corner of the country. Men and women wailing and sending their lamentations to the heavens. The stench of death hovering over litter and debris. The casualty rate staggeringly high, and counting. But it wasn't a war or an earthquake or a landslide. And it wasn't in a place God forgot and was remembered by media only because of the pain and anguish that now emanated from it.

It was the disaster at Ultra last Saturday. Like many Filipinos, I woke up with a jolt last Saturday morning from TV sets blaring in the neighborhood, delivering the shocking news that 60 people—at the time I heard it; the number would climb steadily as the hours went by—had died from a stampede. A throng had jostled and pushed, eventually sparking a riot that claimed the lives of that many people, most of them women and children. People would later tearfully recount how their children were torn off from their grasp by the sheer force of the melee. I will not go into the more gruesome details as TV was full of them last Saturday. Many issued calls to their loved ones, promising to wait at the gate for them till they came. Your mind reeled at the thought they might be addressing kids that would never come back to them. That they would never see again.

Most of those who had gone there and who now issued those tearful calls had one thing in common. They were poor. Their faces bore years of toil and frustration, arduous work and tenuous hope. They came from as far as Cavite and Calamba, Bulacan and Pampanga. Some came farther, from the Visayas. All had gone there in anticipation of coming home with some cash. The show had been showering its audience with money, and money was the one thing they needed badly. And it was the show's anniversary, promising boundless bounties for those who would be lucky enough to get them. Who knows? Maybe they would be lucky that day.

They were not. You did not know who was the more unlucky, those who were trodden underfoot or those who lived to see the lifeless bodies of their children.

I have an idea of the horror of the event. In 2000, my boy, who was 12 years old at the time, and I went to Naga to attend the centennial celebrations of the Peñafrancia fiesta. It drew a record attendance of devotees, the entire *centro* packed with sweaty bodies. At one point, a crowd surged toward us as we were walking on a sidewalk, and it was all I could do to shield my son from the crush of bodies that fell upon us. I could feel a huge force pressing on my back as I pushed back, my hands to the wall. Terror and panic welled up inside me and I was monumentally thankful it lasted for only a few minutes. That image flashed in my brain last Saturday. I multiplied what I had felt a thousand times, and I imagined that was how the victims must have felt.

I've seen tragedies like this before but none so telling about the state of the nation or the plight of the Filipino today than this one. I guess the one that comes closest to the sense of shock Metro Manilans felt was the fire at the Ozone Disco more than a decade ago. It shared in the same spirit of something joyous that turned into bitter tragedy. I do not now recall how many scores of people died there. I do recall that the disco was full of kids who had gone there to celebrate their graduation. A faulty wiring sent sparks flying and soon the place was engulfed in fire. Lacking any safety measures, the place became a death trap. Scores died from the smoke, from being trampled upon, and from being burned to death.

Last Saturday's disaster shares another thing with the Ozone Disco fire, which is that it was completely preventable. The people responsible for the show cannot escape blame for what has happened. True, the crowd was to blame too for shoving and pushing. True, the crowd was to blame too for preventing the ambulances from reaching the victims on time. True, the crowd was to blame too for lacking discipline and sobriety. But you know that crowds in this country are like that. You know a crowd that enormous and the prospect of gain for the few that are lucky enough to get in are a combustible mix. And you just leave things well enough alone? And you do not take measures to ensure some order in the chaos, some method in the madness? And you just say at the end of the day we did not want this to happen, we grieve with the victims' kin?

But as many Filipinos know by now—courtesy of the text messages that flew thick and fast after the event—the real culprit in this disaster is poverty. A friend of mine put it this way, "*Grabe pare*, the only things that are keeping the poor going these days are luck and alms." That sounds even more plaintive in Tagalog. Another said the tragedy showed the true face of the economy. It is not 51 to 1, which is the conversion rate of the peso, it is 74 to 1, the conversion rate of lives to survival.

What can I say? I agree completely. What differentiates the tragedy last Saturday with the ones that came before it is that people went there out of dire straits, out of desperation, out of need to make some money. And they pushed and shoved and trampled with a ferocity reserved only for their life-and-death struggles. *Kapit sa patalim*. Surviving by the skin of your teeth. At least the victims of the collapse of the Colgante Bridge in Naga were there to show religious devotion to their *Ina*. At least the fans that were stampeded to death at Amoranto were there to show devotion to their rock gods. The children, women and men who were crushed to death at Ultra were there to cling to life. They were there trusting in God, luck and gratuity.

That is the greatest tragedy of all.

A parliamentary system?

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

WHAT WILL THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM look like if the Senate blockade is broken through? Let us take a quick look. My comments will be based on the draft being debated by the Committee on Constitutional Amendments of the House of Representatives.

In a nutshell, the picture the draft paints is of a chief executive much stronger than the current President; a Parliament that can be dissolved by the prime minister; and a weaker Supreme Court.

The prominent figures in the proposed system are the Parliament, the prime minister, the Cabinet and a powerless president.

The desired Parliament will be unicameral. This is no surprise. The popular mantra says that two houses of equal strength breed gridlocks.

Parliament will be composed of as many members as the law will provide; and as in the current House, 20 percent of its members will be party-list representatives. What this means is that the party-list system remains tentative and experimental. Expect a thickly populated Parliament, however. The total number of its members can mean that it will be more expensive to maintain than the present bicameral Congress.

The term of members of Parliament (MPs) will be five years, with no limit on reelection. In case parliament is dissolved, the new members will serve only for the unexpired term of their predecessors.

The sessions, the legislative procedure, and the limitations and disqualifications are the same as in the current Congress. Ironically, as in the 1973 version, the prime minister can veto bills passed by his or her creator and lord, the Parliament.

There will be a "question hour" where the prime minister and ministers can be grilled and roasted to taste. This should take care of the gag rule in EO 464.

The MPs elect the prime minister from among themselves and may oust the prime minister by a no-confidence vote. The ouster takes effect when a new prime minister is elected.

There will also be an Electoral Tribunal, which will be the sole judge of election contests, a Committee on Impeachment which will act as the prosecutor in impeachments, and a Commission on Appointments. The Parliament will be the sole judge of impeachments.

The Cabinet members will be chosen from Parliament.

What of the president? He is the head of state, largely ceremonial, and is more like a grandfather figure or the Queen of England. He must be at least 50 years old. He is elected by Parliament from among themselves, or from outside if no one among the MPs is queenly enough. He has a term of five years but he may be removed by impeachment. Upon being elected president, he must resign from the Parliament and from his political party. It is hoped that thus he will be able to reign serenely.

As with all new constitutions, there will be Transitory Provisions. What are the highlights?

Once the new constitution is ratified, the Senate and the House will be joined in a forced wedlock to form the Interim Parliament. The term of the members will last until June 30, 2007 except for the current senators who were elected in 2004. The latter will stay until June 30, 2010. The vice president will likewise become a member of the Interim Parliament until June 30, 2010. However, in the plebiscite for the ratification of the new Constitution, the people will have the option to postpone all elections until the second Monday of May 2010. Then it will be No-El redivivus.

How will the current President fit? Nicely, hand in iron glove. "From the ratification of the foregoing Amendments to June 30, 2010, the incumbent President shall continue to exercise the same powers as she has now, except those she will delegate to the Prime Minister who shall serve as chief operating officer of the government, conformably with the parliamentary system."

But that does not say it all about the incumbent President. While the provision says that the incumbent President will have all the powers she has now, in fact she will have more, because some of the limitations on her powers today will be removed.

To start with, the limitations on the commander-in-chief powers carefully elaborated in the 1987 Constitution will be removed. In effect, the proposal will resurrect the vast powers exercised by President Marcos, which powers were upheld by the martial law Court and overruled by the 1987 Constitution.

Next, the prohibition of the appointment of the President's spouse and close relatives to key government positions will be removed.

Gone, too, will be the prohibition of appointments two months immediately preceding an election.

Likewise, gone will be the need for the Monetary Board's concurrence before the President can contract or guarantee foreign loans.

The appointing authority will also be enhanced by the proposal that the confirmation of promotions in the military will be required only for the ranks of brigadier general and commodore. The President then will be able to appoint colonels and naval captains without need of confirmation.

The President's treaty powers will also be enhanced by the removal of the prohibition of the presence of foreign military forces.

And when she calls a special session, she will be able to specify what subjects the Parliament may take up.

The Chief Executive will also have greater leeway in the handling of public funds because, in the use of discretionary funds and leftovers from special funds, there are no constitutional rules.

Can she be removed by a no-confidence vote? Parliament can try. But she will have the power to dissolve Parliament. And the Supreme Court is being stripped of the power to determine whether she has gravely abused her discretion. Long live a strong Republic!

Time to study the 'Separation Principle'

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

THERE'S NO MISTAKING IT. THE LOCAL CHURCH is being drawn into political affairs. One reads of priests and bishops in different corners of the country drawn to political problems in their communities. Even our parish priest has been drawn into neighborhood politics. Only those in deep denial or those hankering for an unruffled religion inside a church won't see it.

Take the "key points" in the latest pastoral statements of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. The relentless pursuit of truth in the "Hello Garci" case; no cancellation of the 2007 election; the cleansing of the Comelec; warnings against hasty change of the Constitution, extra-constitutional means to resolve the political crisis and deletion of nationalist provisions in the Charter; repeal of the 1995 Mining Act—what are those if not statements of political concern.

The Church may have to accept the fact that she will be continually called upon to be politically involved.

Historically, the engagement is inevitable. The march of history here and abroad points to it. It would do well for the Church to have a keener historical sense, especially since it is now and then accused of being in a time warp and "reacting glacially."

Since the 1980s and 1990s the local Church's pastoral statements have already included public office and public good, like failed elections, the Marcos millions, the Visiting Forces Agreement, the Charter change, cronyism, press freedom, environmentalism and the like. Our rotten political culture penetrates practically every aspect of our national life. Politics is a huge fact of life which the Church can no longer ignore as out of its realm.

Politics is in fact in the Church's realm as well as in the State's. For as we have written time and again, there inheres a moral dimension not only in every human act but in all fields as well—and glaringly so in our politics which has been sick on too many counts. "Everything is fundamentally moral." The CBCP statement is titled "Renewing our Public Life Through Moral Values." Precisely.

Besides, the time when we kept splitting man into body and soul is past. We take the whole man or not at all. We can't say, politics is of the body and belongs to the State; and the soul belongs to the Church. Absurd. Yet, a lot of people live by that absurdity especially politicians high and low who seek to be prayed over, receive communion, cross themselves and then walk out and steal your money and mine.

Unfortunately, when priests and bishops step in, cries of "meddling" are raised by politicians and sighs of "*hindi dapat*" are heard from pious types.

Since men of the cloth may have to live with political involvement, they might as well learn how. A first step may be the thorough study of the "Separation of Church and State"; its history (how, for example, "Freedom" of religion mutated to "Separation"), its full meaning, implications, limits, etc.; examined not only in theory but also in applications.

The study group could gather as much material as possible on the "Separation Principle." The INQUIRER alone has printed columns on the topic. Years ago, Bishop Teodoro Bacani wrote a very helpful book, "Church and Politics." If my memory serves me right, it carried a list of what a priest can or cannot do on the matter.

The number and composition of the group would be very important—constitutionalists and lawyers, priests in academe and in the field, lay persons to reflect what the faithful feel (not those who tell the hierarchy what it wants to hear), lay and religious theologians. The experts would know.

The goal must be articulated, a time frame set, and a stylist or two consulted for the final paper, to avoid another "turgid Church document" that nobody reads or understands. And the results should be made public.

It would be enlightening and surprising to find out, for example, that Masses and sacred images in government offices may be in violation of the "Separation Principle," while priests joining rallies and running for office are not! How a thorough study could be of help all around.

Priests and bishops who bravely venture into what to many of them are still uncharted waters would be surer of where they stand, and what they do. Critics would be more careful of what they say. Then no priest, like Bishop Oscar Cruz, would be subjected to insinuations about "playing a dangerous game." With the barbs that come their way, priests and bishops deserve all the support they can get.

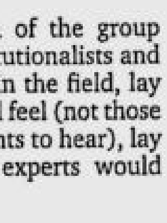
Many "good Catholics" still think that apart from their "priestly duties," priests shouldn't air their political views; should be involved only in fiestas, fund-raising, charitable work and the like, and should be confined in the "faith and morals" box. Their "shock and scandal" could be assuaged with some enlightenment.

And the politicians may stop invoking the "Separation Principle" which they interpret as they please for their benefit.

Thank God, people still look up to the Church for guidance. How great they feel when their Church makes "a stand." If opportunist politicians mind the Church only because of the latter's political clout, the faithful still mind the Church for moral guidance. In this, the Church cannot afford to default or to disappoint. In these times no priest can say: "*Pang simbahan lang kami.*" And the faithful must no longer expect him to stay there.

Asuncion David Maramba is a retired professor, book editor and occasional journalist. Comments to marda_ph@yahoo.com; fax 8210659.

An integrated approach



THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY OF the English Language (4th edition) traces the etymology of "stampede" as follows: "The Spanish word *estampida*, meaning 'explosion, bang, crash, uproar,' seems a vivid term to describe a sudden rush of animals, such as buffaloes or cattle, and was first used in American Spanish. From this use came our word stampede (actually from the Spanish *estampido*, a masculine noun corresponding to the feminine *estampida*, first recorded in 1828). Thus stampede, now a general English word, is an Americanism, a word or expression that originated in the United States .... (which) later was to see stampedes of miners rushing westward to find gold. Not surprisingly, an early instance of the application of this word to humans is found in the San Francisco Herald in 1851."

Necessary reading at this time should include a paper written by John J. Fruin, which was presented at the First International Conference on Engineering for Crowd Safety held in London in 1993. The paper scientifically, but graphically states: "It is difficult to describe the psychological and physiological pressures within crowds at maximum density. When crowd density equals the plan area of the human body, individual control is lost, as one becomes an involuntary part of the mass. At occupancies of about seven persons per square meter, the crowd becomes almost a fluid mass. Shock waves can be propagated through the mass, sufficient to lift people off their feet and propel them distances of 3 m (10 ft) or more. People may be literally lifted out of their shoes, and have [their] clothing torn off."

Among the notable points raised by his paper is that many deaths in stampedes (or "crowd disasters" as his paper refers to them) are caused not by trampling, but by suffocation or from the heat caused by being trapped in a crowd: "Intense crowd pressures, exacerbated by anxiety, make it difficult to breathe. The heat and thermal insulation of surrounding bodies cause some to be weakened and faint. Access to those who fall is impossible. Removal of those in distress can only be accomplished by lifting them up and passing them overhead to the exterior of the crowd."

The pressure is, indeed, intense and virtually irresistible. On this, Fruin's paper says: "Crowd forces can reach levels almost impossible to resist or control. Virtually all crowd deaths are due to compressive asphyxia and not the 'trampling' reported by the news media .... bent steel railings after several fatal crowd incidents show that forces of more than 4,500 N (1,000 lb) occurred. Forces are due to pushing, and the domino effect of people leaning against each other."

Particular attention should be given to Fruin's recommendations to prevent crowd disasters. The first is for everyone to understand the distinction between crowd management and crowd control. Crowd management, he says, is "the systematic planning for, and supervision of, the orderly movement and assembly of people"; while crowd control is "the restriction or limitation of group behaviour ... [it] may be part of a crowd management plan, or occur as an unplanned reaction to a group problem. It can include extreme measures to enforce order, such as the use of force, arrest, or threat of personal injury. It may employ barriers that alter the space available for occupancy and patterns of group movement. Inappropriate or poorly managed control procedures have precipitated crowd incidents rather than preventing them. For example, police, reacting to a group of unruly persons at a rock concert, herded spectators into areas where there were no means of egress."

Fruin points out that crowds differ from each other; the kind of crowds a particular event attracts has to be taken into consideration when planning an event. Crowds, in turn, can attract other crowds: and these additional crowds can complicate matters. Therefore, Fruin says that "A proactive type of management is required, anticipating and resolving problems before they occur, rather than reacting when it could be too late."

Part of proactive management includes a Crowd Management Center, where real-time information on what's going on can be received and acted upon. He describes the ideal center as one that "would provide a maximum view of the venue, supplemented by video camera access to blind spaces, pressure points, and major movement pathways. Full communications coordination should be provided between all venue staff, local police, fire and emergency medical services, and any on-site radio or television media. Radio frequencies, telephone numbers and similar communications information and related procedures should be in a printed form distributed to all staff." Obviously, this requires intensive training for the organizer's staff.

Fruin also enumerates important components of a successful crowd management and crowd control plan: "Response to crowd incidents must be rapid, authoritative, and provide clear and unambiguous information about the emergency and required group actions"; and it should include a means to disperse people along multiple routes and not just a central route. Performers should be briefed on their responsibility to the audience, lest their behavior trigger a crowd disaster: "Performers must provide advance notice of cancellation, before patrons begin entering the venue. Communication with the crowd should not be delayed if cancellation occurs after entry. Announcements should clearly establish refund policies, exit routes, and need for orderly movement."

Ticketing, too, is crucial: "Reserved section and seat tickets determine specific area for occupancy, and routes of entry and egress. Tickets also provide a means of instructing patrons on rules of conduct expected within the venue," Fruin says.

Fe Hidalgo's model classroom

COMMENTARY

Maria "Butchie" Lim-Ayuyao

THE MAIN GOAL OF THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION IS TO bring back the stature of our public schools as centers for quality education. This is what I constantly tell public school educators whenever I get the chance to be with them—in informal gatherings or during our Mentoring the Mentors sessions. Many of the best and brightest Filipinos came from public schools. They went on to become our greatest presidents, senators, chief justices, writers, artists and sportsmen.

During the summer of 2002, the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP) conducted a series of conferences with educators and education stakeholders. We wanted to find out why the public school system was perceived by many as synonymous with academic mediocrity. The late Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, former education secretary, pointed out that the system's decline seemed to have begun just after World War II, when the existing infrastructure could not keep up with the exponential growth of public school enrollment. Based on what we learned from these meetings—and believe me, we did learn a lot—we launched the Education Revolution to help make the improvement of public education a continuing community concern.

In the course of promoting Education Revolution, I have had the unique opportunity to listen to other NGOs and private foundations identify their success factors as well as the problems they encountered in their own community-level initiatives to improve education.

Some 18 million pupils and students are enrolled in about 40,000 public schools all over the country. Shaping their collective learning experience—from the fundamental 3Rs to positive socio-civic values—are 400,000 or so public school teachers and principals with varying skills and motivation levels. These men and women do the best they can to meet the academic demand, often working under tremendous limitations such as insufficient workbooks and teaching materials, overcrowded classes and a punishing teaching load that can make even the healthiest teacher absolutely bone-weary at the end of the class day.

The unenviable job of leading this veritable army of educators belongs to the education secretary. I have had the privilege of getting to know quite a few them these past years. Brother Andrew, of course, was a dear friend, as is Dr. Edilberto "DJ" De Jesus, one of FWWPP's founding members.

Today, that job belongs to Dr. Fe A. Hidalgo, in an acting capacity. Dr. Hidalgo is no stranger to FWWPP, as she has been our keynote speaker on more than one occasion. She is no stranger either to the problems and frustrations that public school teachers deal with daily; herself having been one of them for several years.

Together with FWWPP's executive staff, I went to see Dr. Hidalgo at her office a few days ago. We wanted to show her some innovations we had developed to make private sector support for the improvement of public education a widespread practice at the community level. She greeted us warmly and with a bit of very good news. "Academic achievement of our public school students, while still low, has been going up steadily," she said. "It used to be that the results [of the diagnostic tests] either went up or down from year to year. Today, we are seeing consistent upward increments. We in the Department of Education would like to keep that momentum," she told us. Our own experience validates her assertion.

Education is a public value, and more and more people are beginning to see themselves as genuine education stakeholders. Private foundations, NGOs, corporate citizens and individuals with a high sense of civic duty have been increasing the volume and quality of their assistance to public schools. In 2003, corporate support for public education amounted to something like P600 million. This doubled to about P1.2 billion in 2004.

That's the silver lining.

Here's the dark cloud.

The assistance and resources that the private sector has been extending to public schools tend to come across as doles—as these are rarely based on the recipient school's academic performance—a tendency that could lead to two unwelcome consequences.

First, since the resources are there for the asking, a culture of mendicancy among public schools could emerge.

Second, since the public school in most cases is a passive beneficiary, no perceptible academic improvement is likely to take place.

To her credit, Dr. Hidalgo is deeply aware of this and, from all indications, she is not about to take things sitting down. Positive steps are being taken to improve school administration.

In line with the DepEd's Schools First Initiative, Dr. Hidalgo has been meeting with schools division superintendents to see how far they have gone in preparing their respective school-based management programs and School Improvement Plans.

At the policy level, she has been exerting a lot of effort to get the Education for All By All program adopted. She has been making representations with Neda for this purpose.

However, some education stakeholders who are not part of the DepEd bureaucracy might just overlook these positive steps to make public schools better. After all, the school system's inadequacies are more glaring and easier to see. Our literacy rate is still high if literacy only pertains to the individual's ability to read. However, functional literacy—which connotes comprehension—is another matter.

In many areas, there are not enough classrooms. In others, students don't have enough workbooks and textbooks, or even electricity and water or perimeter fences. Some places simply don't have enough teachers.

Organizations with education-focused initiatives have repeatedly contended that the delivery of quality education must be a community priority. This can only happen if the community is aware of the challenges public education faces and the options that are available for them to meet these challenges together with the DepEd.

Dr. Hidalgo herself notes that the moment the community knows what's going on, "the more they want to help."

The fastest way to bring an idea across is to present it in a vivid, picturesque way so that people can latch on to it. "If we want people to go out of their way to help public education, we should formulate a picture of a model classroom" says Dr. Hidalgo.

Now what would that be? Many of us would probably see new desks and chairs, well-ventilated rooms and the like in our mind's eye. For Dr. Hidalgo however, the model classroom goes beyond just the structure. It has to be a place where teachers can teach well and where children can learn equally well, happily.

Are you ready to join her in building this kind of classroom? If you are, come and be a part of FWWPP's Education Revolution 2006.

Maria "Butchie" Lim-Ayuyao, Ed. D., is the incumbent president of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power. She recently retired as executive vice president and treasurer of the Centro Escolar University.

MEDICard-Kodak Phils. Ltd. Signing

Kodak Phils., Ltd., one of the ranking premiere multinational corporations in the world, recently signed its renewal healthcare agreement with MEDICard Philippines. Seated (L-R) are Kodak's Irinah Berkenkotter (HR Operations Mngr.) and Raymond Albert (General Manager) with MEDICard's Dr. Nicanor Montoya (President) and Luis Montoya (EVP and GM). Standing (L-R) are MEDICard's Voltaire Victoria (Sales and Business Dev't. Mngr.), Centrolink's Pia Reyes (Managing Director), Kodak's Ana Isabel Florentino (HR Asst.) and Jonathan Quero (Purchasing Mngr.). Kodak has been one of MEDICard's valued clients since 1991.

LETTERS

Perils to education

IN A COMMENTARY PUBLISHED IN the INQUIRER's Jan. 23 issue, Education Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz underscored the triumph of a professionalized education bureaucracy notwithstanding the department's "headless" semblance because acting Secretary Fe Hidalgo has yet to gain full stewardship of the education bureau.

I do believe that quality education provides stability to our country and assures our children of a better life and a better future. But because excessive politics has captured our public education system, the future of this nation lies in great peril.

Indeed, one horn of the public education problem stems from bad politics. Bad politics engenders a vicious circle of patronage and corruption in the public education system. Attempts to implement reforms are stifled by decisions that favor vested interests, which contribute to the ailing state of our public education system.

The intricacies of the Arroyo administration typify a glaring example of this problem. It may be recalled that about P15 million in education funds had been allegedly used as "payoffs" to win the support of congressmen at the height of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's impeachment proceedings last year.

The other horn results from the poor support of government. For instance, budgetary allocation for education in the proposed 2006 national budget may have increased in absolute terms compared to the previous year. But in percentage of the national budget, it has actually decreased from 14.7 percent last year to 13.9 percent. In contrast, Asean countries continue to allot more and more funds for education. It is an imperative for any developing country to provide crucial investments in human capital, such as education, if it intends at all to keep its economy afloat.

There is a need to liberate our public education system from the clutches of bad politics, corruption and poor prioritization from the Arroyo administration.

The unsung yet equally glorious triumph of voluntary education organizations, local school boards and PTAs must be our source of hope when everything else begins to fade.

We need to remain steadfast, vigilant and united in curbing the problems that hound our public schools, our teachers and our children.

We need to champion the welfare of our teachers for they are the harbingers of knowledge. Their role in nation-building and in the conditioning of the minds of our leaders of tomorrow must never be compromised and belittled.

We need to be unrelenting in our efforts to provide our children with quality education, now and for posterity.

Education is the key to the improvement of the quality of life of Filipinos. We must take care of our teachers so that our teachers in turn will take care of our children, who will take care of the future of our country.

—TERESA AQUINO-ORETA,
Makati City

Nobody blamed for violating truce

IN THE NEWS ARTICLE TITLED "VICE MAYOR, 2 others killed in ambush" (PDI, 12/17/05), I was reported to have "accused the Maulana family of violating a truce when they continued to attack the Lao clan."

No INQUIRER reporter interviewed me regarding the incident; if ever I made a public statement to shed light on the conflict, it could not have been meant what the news item made it to be. As far as I can recall, the last time I was interviewed by an INQUIRER reporter was on Oct. 24, 2005. The interview was not about that problem.

I deplore the inaccuracy in the report, not only because the statement did not come from me but also because it degrades my reputation as head of the GRP-MILF local monitoring team which is supposed to be neutral in the conflict. Our purpose is only to pacify and settle the conflict and to remain impartial. The report has, therefore, caused me some personal discomfort.

—HALIL SALAMAT,
co-chair,
GRP-MILF Local Monitoring Team,
Zamboanga del Sur

While Halil Salamat may not have categorically said that he accused the Maulana family of disregarding a truce, it was the gist of his statement in an interview that took place in October last year with Michael Sarcauga, another INQUIRER correspondent. Salamat told Sarcauga that the MILF peacekeeping team decided to go home because the Maulanas disregarded its effort to bring the warring families to a dialogue; instead the Maulanas attacked the MILF's stronghold island village of Tarakan in Dinas town. The paragraph on Salamat was just a backgrounder on the efforts to resolve the Maulana-Lao family feud.

—HERNAN DE LA CRUZ,
correspondent, PDI Mindanao Bureau

DENR reforms hew to good governance

THIS IS IN REPLY TO THE JAN. 16 COLUMN, titled "Defensor's loose ends at DENR," of Honesto C. General.

We appreciate General's concern for the environment. DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 2005-06, "Guidelines for the Institution of a System of Mandatory Environmental Insurance Coverage (MEIC)," institutes a policy designed to address the huge and ever-growing clean-up costs and liabilities (of companies and industries) arising from pollution and damage to the environment.

In environmental disasters/accidents, the government usually ends up footing the bill for the cleanup while the affected communities suffer because of the long delay of rehabilitation. Recent environmental disasters—such as the mining accident in Rapu-Rapu, Albay; the Semirara oil spill; the destruction of lives and property brought about by the cut logs in last year's flooding in the provinces of Aurora, Quezon and Nueva Ecija; and the Marinduque mining accident a few years ago—are only some of the classic cases which made us realize the urgent need for DAO 2005-06.

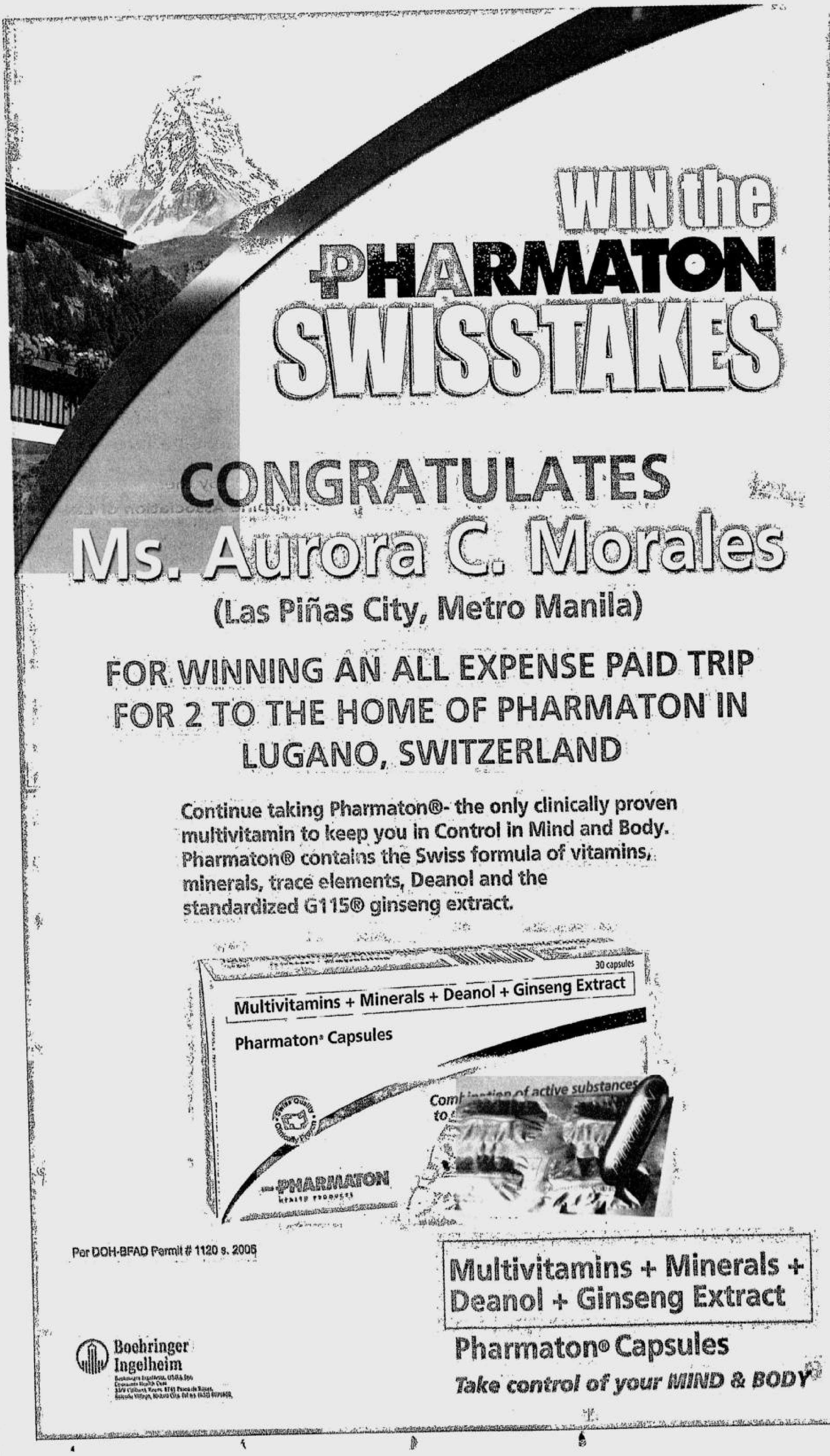
The Department of Environment and Natural Resources spearheads the implementation of this highly specialized policy. The delay in the release of subsequent issuances, such as the guidelines for identifying the levels of risks and the administrative arrangements, was inevitable because we had to do massive consultation with the stakeholders.

However, we wish to inform General that these guidelines have been released under DENR Memorandum Order No. 021, dated Dec. 29, 2005. Thus, the MEIC policy is now being fully implemented.

We also would like to thank General for raising the concerns on accreditation and the issue on monopoly. We share these concerns with him. Thus, despite the accreditation requirements by the DENR, we have yielded to the Insurance Commission in determining the qualifications of the participating insurance companies. So far we have not rejected any interested insurance company certified in good standing by the Department of Finance/Insurance Commission. There are now more than 40 insurance companies participating in the program.

Finally, we would like to assure General and his readers that even as we institute reforms to improve the quality of our environment, these will always be pursued in the spirit of the government's policy on good governance.

—MICHAEL T. DEFENSOR,
secretary,
Department of Environment
and Natural Resources,
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City



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Sex workers flock to Jolo for US troops

JOLO, SULU—LURED BY THE PROSPECTS OF EARNING MORE from American soldiers participating in the joint Philippine-US humanitarian mission here, commercial sex workers have arrived in this conservative Muslim province, officials said Thursday.

Acting Mayor Alkramer Izquierdo said the presence of prostituted women here had been observed as early as December last year following media reports about the planned Balikatan mission.

"It has become our greatest concern. My office is being flooded with complaints and petitions from residents near the military camp," Izquierdo told the INQUIRER.

He said the complaints had been investigated and found to be valid.

Videoke bars featuring scantily dressed women have suddenly sprouted near the camp, where the American soldiers would be staying, Izquierdo said.

About 200 US soldiers will be participating in the month-long humanitarian mission starting this month.

"I support the Balikatan, but we also fear the negative impact of prostitution in our town," Izquierdo said.

Retired Army Maj. Roberto Parayno, president of the Tabak village association, said that from 21 in November, the number of commercial sex workers here increased to about 100.

"Some of our female teenagers were being mistaken for prostitutes and our teachers could no longer make their lesson plans at night due to noise coming from the videoke bars," Parayno said.

He said it was a sad thing that instead of curbing the trade, several military personnel were even acting as pimps for the sex workers.

"Most of these women came from Pagadian City, Dipolog City, and Zamboanga City and the majority of them are very young," Parayno said.

Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Vizcaya bishop seeks talks with execs, 'jueteng' workers

BAYOMBONG, NUEva Vizcaya—Catholic Bishop Ramon Villena on Thursday invited government officials to a dialogue to discuss the demands of "jueteng" workers displaced by the crackdown on illegal gambling operations last week.

In a statement faxed to the INQUIRER, Villena asked provincial officials led by Gov. Luisa Cuaresma, mayors, police officers and other national agencies officials to address the plea of the bet collectors that they be given alternative sources of livelihood.

"Let us listen to each other, air our sentiments and ideas in an atmosphere of fraternal exchange and come up with solutions to the issues that will be raised before us," he said.

Villena's call was in response to appeals by bet collectors who claimed that they had lost their jobs as a result of the police crackdown.

On Tuesday, about 150 bet collectors from various towns of the province again converged at the clergy house in Barangay Luyang to seek a meeting with Villena.

They said they wanted to ask the bishop to give them jobs or stop his anti-jueteng crusade.

Villena failed to meet them as he had to attend meetings of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

He said the jueteng workers' concerns had become "more urgent" after their Tuesday meeting with local priests, where they aired their difficulty in coping with the loss of their only source of income.

Aside from provincial officials, Villena invited mayors of the towns where jueteng used to operate, as well as acting provincial police director Supt. Agripino Lopez Jr.

He asked provincial social welfare, labor and trade officials to attend the dialogue. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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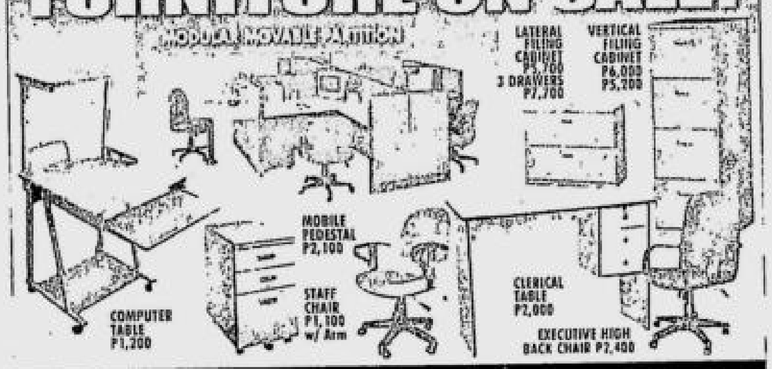
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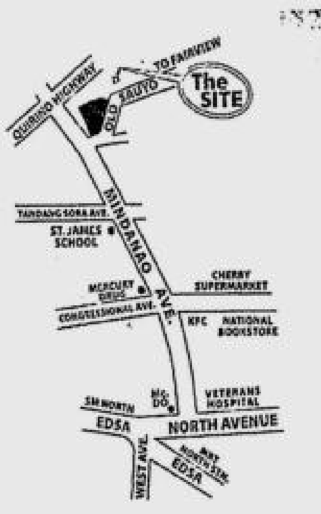

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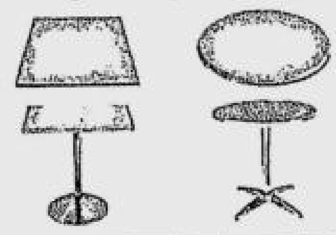

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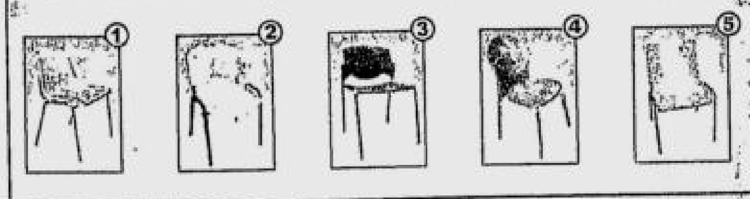

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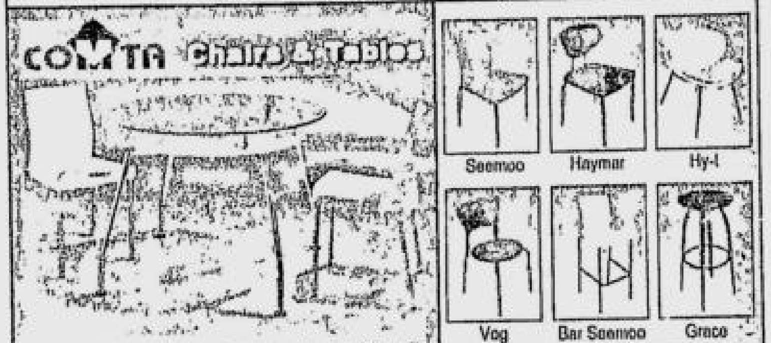

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Boracay resort owners say oil spill no threat

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THE MASSIVE OIL SPILL OFF the coast of Semirara Island in Antique poses no immediate threat to Boracay in Aklan, according to a statement of resort owners in the world-renowned island.

They, however, said the cleanup of the oil spill should be thorough and hastened to avoid long-term adverse consequences on the tourist destination.

Orlando Sacay, chair of the Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI), said in the statement that it was fortunate that the northeasterly wind was prevailing when the oil spill occurred with the wind blowing from east to west or towards Semirara.

He, however, pointed out that Boracay is 60 km from Semirara and "unless the oil spill is cleaned up, oil particles will wash ashore in Boracay in the future."

Around 195,000 liters of bunker fuel have contaminated mangroves and other marine life after bad weather forced a power barge of the National Power Corp. (Napocor) to run aground last Dec. 18, some 200 meters off Barangay Semirara, one of three villages of the island.

It is believed to be the worst oil spill in the country's history, according to the Coast Guard. Napocor has blamed bad weather for the incident.

The oil spill has contaminated 236 hectares of mangrove forests and 40 square kilometers of marine life off the coast of the Semirara.

Senators Edgardo Angara and Miriam Defensor-Santiago on Thursday called on the Napocor to speed up the clean up and warned that the oil spill threatens Boracay, the country's premier destination.

Records at the Department of Tourism showed that 383,098 tourists visited the island from January to September last year and poured in P7.04 billion to the economy.

Julian Amador, Department of Environment and Natural Resources executive director for Western Visayas, allayed fears of immediate threats to the world famous island.

"We are closely monitoring and it is unlikely at this point that the spill threatens Boracay," Amador told the INQUIRER.

Amador said most of the oil spill is now contained at the Semirara shoreline. Cleanup teams have also installed spill booms to prevent the spread of the now thick and sticky fuel.

But Amador said that cleanup operations should be completed before the wind reverses its direction during the *habagat* season in May.

The cleanup operations composed of Coast Guard personnel and 250 residents hired by Napocor had collected around 18,000 sacks of contaminated materials, said Amador.

He said the cleanup was expected to be finished by April.

The Office of Civil Defense in Western Visayas reported that around 10,000 residents of the Semirara had been affected by the oil spill as of Jan. 25.

Sacay said Napocor should assume full responsibility for the clean up and pay for the environmental damage.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar has assured that the state-owned agency will shoulder the expenses of the cleanup estimated to reach P90 million and provide compensation to the affected residents.

Coal spill

In Pangasinan, residents of Agno town have raised fears over the possible destruction of their marine environment due to the spilt coal from a grounded barge in the waters off Barangay Macaboboni.

Some 300 cubic meters of coal, equivalent to about 1,200 sacks, have been spilt from the barge LCT Fisner after it grounded in Sitio Talisay on Dec. 18 last year.

The barge, owned by the Asian Shipping Corp., came from the port of Semirara in Antique and was on its way to San Fernando City in La Union to deliver 4,564 metric tons of coal when strong winds and waves pushed it inland.

Remedios Jimenez, a chemical engineer of the DENR's environmental management bureau in the Ilocos, said the spilt coal's effects on the village's water could be minimal.

She said the spilt coal was concentrated in a cove covering an area of 160 square meters. The grounded barge is located about 110 meters from the village's coastline, she said.

"But we can't tell the effects [of the spilt coal] on the corals yet unless an in-depth study is undertaken," she said.

Jimenez said the coal, with sizes ranging from half an inch to four inches, might have disturbed fish habitat in the area.

Town police chief Insp. Leonardo Navalta inspected the area where the barge ran aground and found that some of the coal had indeed spilt.

"It was possible that strong winds and big waves toppled the barge and caused the coal [it was carrying] to spill," Navalta said.

Lydia Colobong, an environmental activist from the town, said the village boasts of white sand beaches but pieces of coal have started to mar the coastline.

Colobong asked local officials to act fast and demand that the barge's owners tow the vessel before more pieces of coal spill into the sea.

A report of the community environment and natural resources office (Cenro) in Alaminos City said the boat captain denied throwing coal into the village's water.

Eugenio Santos Jr. of the Alaminos Cenro said he would recommend to the vessel's owners the removal of the coal from the barge to avoid further spillage. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Arrest witness' killers, cops told

CAGAYAN DE ORO City—The conviction of former police officer Guillermo Wapile may have pleased the Damalerio family but the wife of slain witness Edgar Amoro said she was losing hope.

Erlinda Amoro said the authorities were not doing anything to arrest the suspects.

"I wonder why the entire police force of Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay and Pagadian City have done nothing to enforce the warrants of arrest," she said.

Edgar Amoro named Wapile as the triggerman in the killing of his namesake—journalist Edgar Damalerio.

On Feb. 2 last year, Amoro was killed by motorcycle-riding men a few meters from the gates of the Zamboanga del Sur National High School where he was teaching.

Police named two suspects, Norhan Ambol, the son of a town councilor, and Abubakar Maulana, alias Madix.

Pagadian police chief Supt. Bernardo Palmero said investigators were having a hard time finding the suspects.

Erlinda said the failure to arrest the suspects had forced her and her seven children to leave the city for safety. "My older child had to drop from work to hide from them," she said. *Grace Albasin, PDI M. Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Suspect in radioman's killing charged

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation in Pagadian City said it had filed murder charges against a military intelligence agent suspected to be behind the killing of Zamboanga del Sur information officer Rolly Cañete. NBI supervising agent Moises Tamayo said Herbert Liguan of the Military Intelligence Battalion under the Army's 1st Infantry Division in Pulacan, Zamboanga del Sur, was positively identified by witnesses as the one who shot and killed Cañete on Jan. 20. Cañete was known for his tirades against the political enemies of Zamboanga del Sur Gov. Aurora Cerilles and her husband, Rep. Antonio Cerilles.

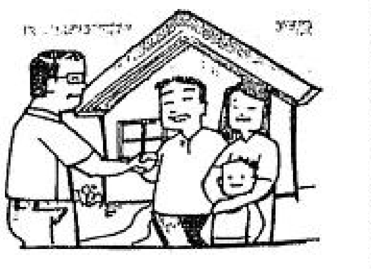
Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ex-mayor, guards survive attack

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A former mayor of Laurel town in Batangas, his driver and bodyguard survived an ambush by two armed men on Jan. 29, police said. Ex-Mayor Joven de Grano was traveling along a national road in Barangay Poblacion 5 at about 9:30 p.m. on board a car when two unidentified men on a parked motorcycle fired at the vehicle. The attackers immediately fled after hitting the front and rear of the car.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

50 houses turned over



BULALACAO, Oriental Mindoro—Philamlife executives and their employees, together with Gawad Kalinga (GK) beneficiaries held a ceremonial build and turnover of 50 houses for poor families here. Bulalacao is in the southernmost part of the province. Philam funded the P2.5-million housing project (P50,000 per house), while the GK volunteers and beneficiaries provided labor. Thirty-four of the families are Christians while 16 are Hanunuo Mangyan.

Marciano Virola Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Security guard killed

CABUYAO, Laguna—The security guard of a subdivision here who tried to help a woman resident whose mobile phone unit was taken at gunpoint at dawn on Jan. 27 was shot dead by three unidentified armed men. Police said security guard Gregorio Patuga, Jr., 34, of General Trias, Cavite, was about to accost the holdup men along the subdivision's main road when he was shot several times. The guard died on the spot.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

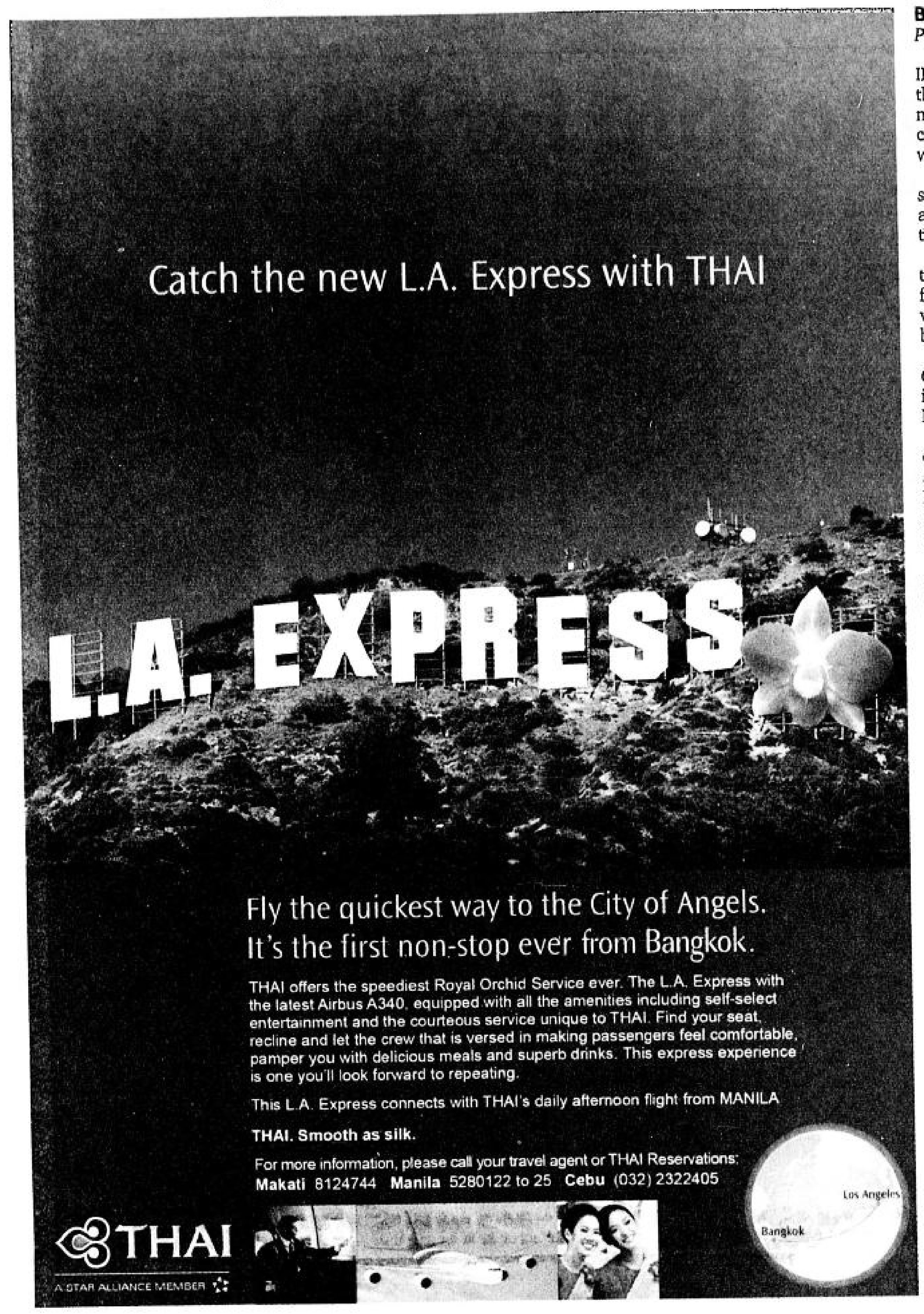
Militant leader survives attack

CALAMBA CITY—A village chief and local coordinator of the militant party-list group Bayan Muna barely survived an attempt on his life while he was resting near the municipal hall of Lian, Batangas on Jan. 31, the human rights group Karapatan reported. Dina Capetillo, spokesperson of Karapatan-Batangas, said Carlito Caisip, 38, chair of Barangay San Diego, Lian, had just attended the town parade when two motorcycle-riding men shot him at around 3 p.m. Caisip was hit in the shoulders but was able to run for safety. He was rushed to a nearby hospital and is now in stable condition, Capetillo said. She said the victim was active in the campaign to pull out government troops in the area *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

6 cops relieved

COTABATO CITY—At least six policemen were relieved of their duties here because of involvement in "dubious activities" and abandonment of posts, said city police chief Supt. Abubakar Mangelen Sr. Mangelen said the move was in connection with efforts to shape up policemen. Those relieved were Insp. Abbas Mantoc, chief of the intelligence section; SPO2 Felix Acero; SPO2 Villamor Suyat and SPO2 Murtaha Kiram; PO3 Saudi Mokamad; and PO2 Ming Kadalum.

Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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FATALITY LIST

HERE IS A PARTIAL LIST OF people listed as dead at the Arlington Memorial Chapel on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City and at the Arlington Memorial Chapel in Pasig City following the stampede at the PhilSports Arena:

Arlington-Pasig

- Amelia Flores Abrera
- Eda Aranquiz Alesna
- Jovita Halili Apalla
- Manuela Batoon Ara
- Maritess Aguilar Arcillo
- Erlinda Navarro Ariola
- Charlita Asisten
- Josephine Barra
- Precila Herodico Barsaga
- Elena Belafonte Belan
- Lorna Mendoza Belantos
- Vidang Bolor
- Julianne Elaine A. Book
- Estrelita Reyes Canoy
- Zenaida Barbarica Carr
- Nida Catre Cruz
- Raymundo Cajayon dela Fuente
- Gertrudes Gascon
- Fe Vega Gomez
- Edna Tiwaya Gonzales
- Virginia Javier
- Yolanda Cangas Lubrico
- Trinidad Magan
- Yolanda Matienzo
- Elena Montero
- Lolita Espinido Mora
- Helen A. Nebres
- Marissa D. Obingayan
- Linda Boneo Padrinao
- Guillerma Aviles Parducho
- Rosita T. Santos
- Jovita Villanueva

Arlington-Araneta

- Ofelia Casipe
- Dolores de Jesus
- Rufa Laragas Rosales
- Rosalina Comia Salazar
- Catalina Naynes Gozo
- Arsenia Naña Herrera
- Virginia Osiaza Comia
- Nita Lacambra Balibalita
- Belen Comia Malabanan
- Trinidad Casing
- Rosalinda Fajardo
- Elizabeth Belgara Biñas
- Ernie Boter Garcia
- Ester Rondario Narvaez
- Liza Capat Padilla
- Alicia Villanueva
- Enriqueta B. Labaton
- Editha E. Villanueva
- Eufrocina E. Alcantara
- Julie A. Vargas
- Dionisia C. Bolaño
- Aurora N. Soriano
- Antonina F. Campanero
- Remedios M. Bulan
- Felicidad T. dela Vega
- Norma L. Cabanatan
- Angela A. Casing

Probers find lapses in security setup

From page A1

vestigation. That is not fair to everybody," Gonzalez said.

According to Gonzalez, the issue would not necessarily end with the release of monetary assistance to the victims and their families.

"It's not just a question of giving financial help. The damage caused may be more than what you are willing to offer," he said.

Even in cases of negligence and accidents, responsibility has to fall on someone, he pointed out.

"If you pass under a house and a flower pot falls on your head, there is responsibility on the owner of the house," he said.

Hearing starts

People who unintentionally kill someone by accident or through a careless act could be liable to charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide, according to Gonzalez.

Crowds estimated between 30,000 and 50,000 people had massed up outside the PhilSports Arena when the stampede broke out.

Most of them had come from depressed areas in Metro Manila and nearby provinces and had hoped to win raffle tickets that would entitle them to about P2.5 million in prizes.

At yesterday's initial hearing on the incident, members of a government fact-finding team said the decision to tell the thousands of people waiting outside the PhilSports Arena that they could not all be accommodated inside might have triggered the stampede.

Seating capacity

The probe team said the PhilSports Arena had a total of seating capacity of between 17,000 and 19,000. This includes the 9,000 capacity of its covered portion and the 8,000 capacity of the bleachers outside. An unused section of the bleachers can accommodate another 2,000.

The stampede occurred at one of the two entrances.

Steering away from the issue of culpability for the tragedy, members of the probe body said after the hearing that there appeared to be shortcomings in security preparations.

"What we will say are the facts that we gathered," Interior Undersecretary and panel chair Marius Corpus told the INQUIRER. "*Definitely, may mga pagkukulang* (there were shortcomings)."

RELATIVES of some of the fatalities offer flowers in front of the PhilSports Arena. RUDY ESPERAS

No coordination

"I don't know how you would call them—oversights or lapses," he said. "There was no proper coordination with the police, there was no contingency plan for crowd management, there was even no radio contact (with the police) so that these things could have been avoided."

But Corpus clarified the probe was merely fact-finding in nature and would not delve into criminal liability, saying that was up to the Department of Justice.

Another panel member echoed Corpus' observations about supposed security shortcomings.

"It appears to be that way," said Frank Castillo of the Office of Civil Defense. "There should be a contingency plan, especially for events (that involved) a big number of people."

He said the organizers, for one, had assumed that the police had responsibility outside of the barriers they had erected.

But Castillo said such "taskings have to be clear."

Invited to yesterday's hearing were Rene Luspo, the ABS-CBN head security, and Marilou Almaden, its business unit.

Earlier, panel members inspected the PhilSports Arena and spoke with its security officials.

The panel focused on security arrangements for the game show.

Crowd control

In particular, it raised questions on whether the security officers of ABS-CBN and the management of the Philippine Sports Commission had contingency plans for crowd control.

"The main focus of our concern is crowd control," Luspo told the panel. He said ABS-CBN had plans for crowd control but they were not put in writing.

He said the security planning took into account that the PhilSports Arena had only "two logical entrances."

"We assumed that we will be dealing with ... about 25,000. That's the assumption we used," Luspo said.

"Our focus in the planning was how to really manage the crowd before we can get (them) into the bleachers and the covered facility."

"When we made a plan, we took into consideration that there are going to be two entrances ... The focus—any security person will bear me out— ... one will focus on putting more resources where it is deemed weak, and not where (it is) deemed inherently strong."

Police not told

Corpus said that when the decision was reached to tell the crowd that not all could be let in, the organizers did not tell the police about it.

"If assurances were made that many of them could still be accommodated, that pressure (to get inside) could have been lessened," said Chief Supt. Oscar Valenzuela, head of the Eastern Police District and member of the probe body.

"Looking from the crowd's point of view, those who felt they could no longer enter would try something to get in," he said.

The motive to get inside—earning quick cash—was there, according to Valenzuela.

Luspo told the panel that while it was true that they did not have a written security plan, he disagreed that security plans should be put in writing all the time.

Security plans flexible

Otherwise, he would end up "simply writing," he said.

The plans were "flexible," he said, and their decisions depended upon the situation on the ground, and the situation kept changing.

"Almost every day we (had) to meet and discuss the changes in the situation, and this was the reason why we made changes in plans," he said.

It was the "spillover crowd," many of whom were men, in front of the gate that went unruly and started to push forward, he said.

Luspo admitted that things could have been done to avoid the tragedy.

"I don't think there is a dispute about that," he said. "We can talk about what we could have done, we recognize that. But we did what we thought was best at the time."

Willie and Charo

He added: "We could have done more, but at that point ... we thought it was adequate and (we had) talked to the right people."

The probe panel invited top ABS-CBN executive Charo Santos-Concio and comedian Willie Revillame to the hearing, but their lawyer said the two personalities did not have direct participation in the planning of the noontime show.

Santos-Concio and Revillame were inside the DILG building during the inquiry, but the ABS-CBN counsel, Regis Puno, did not present them.

"Considering that Charo Santos and (Revillame) have absolutely no participation other than just prescribed (as TV executive and talent, respectively), I seek the indulgence of the committee to dispense with their attendance," Puno told the probe body.

GMA pledge

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday assured families of the victims that justice would be served.

She ordered various agencies to make sure that assistance would not only be provided the kin of the victims but also that measures were undertaken to prevent a repeat of the incident.

"I assure the victims' kin that the ends of criminal and social justice will be served and those responsible will be taken account for their negligence or misdeeds," Ms Arroyo said. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

A MAN cries as he embraces his dead wife, one of the victims of the stampede. JOAN BONDOC

Tragedy wake-up call...

From page A1

social malaise."

With cash prizes of up to P1 million, "Wowowee" drew tens of thousands of the poor from provinces. It turned into a nightmare when more than 70 people were crushed to death.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the tragedy should remind the government that poverty could not be licked as long as scarce resources for job-generating enterprises "are dissipated through corruption and mismanagement."

More than 40 percent of Filipinos live on less than P100 a day.

"The loss of 79 lives and the injuries sustained by scores of others clearly belie the administration's claim that the economy is in good shape. People would not risk being crushed to death if times were good," Pimentel said in a statement.

Sen. Jamby Madrigal, for her part, said: "This is a wake-up call. A lot of our people are poor, and getting poorer. In their desperation, our people have placed their hopes for a better life in a game show."

"Must we wait for more of this stampede to happen? I hope not. Now is the time for us to move for meaningful reforms and not just pay lip service to our people. I pray to God that this incident will not happen again," Madrigal said.

Disheartening

Sharing his colleagues' views, Senate President Franklin Drilon said the stampede was disheartening.

"This only shows that most of our countrymen are poor who are banking on luck, and are hoping that they will bag prizes being raffled off [in shows like Wowowee],'" Drilon said over radio dzBB.

In the House, Cibac party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva said Filipinos should recognize the realities of life in the country instead of insisting that life was getting better.

Only by acknowledging the worsening poverty can the country start providing real solutions to the problem, Villanueva said.

Microfinance

Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara said so many Filipinos were living in abject poverty and yet the government was only giving lip service to poverty alleviation.

He suggested that the House increase the budget for social services, education, health and job-creation and pass measures that would promptly arrest poverty and provide long-term solution to the "hopelessness that is slowly eating the foundations of this nation."

Pampanga Rep. Francis L. Nepomuceno, chair of the House committee on civil service and professional regulation, proposed that the loan portfolio for microfinance be increased to P30 billion and the budget for agriculture and fishery production raised also by P30 billion.

"For centuries now, the families of farmers and fisherfolk have remained poor, ignorant and haunted by diseases. We must set them free from the bondage of poverty," he said. *Reports from TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac*

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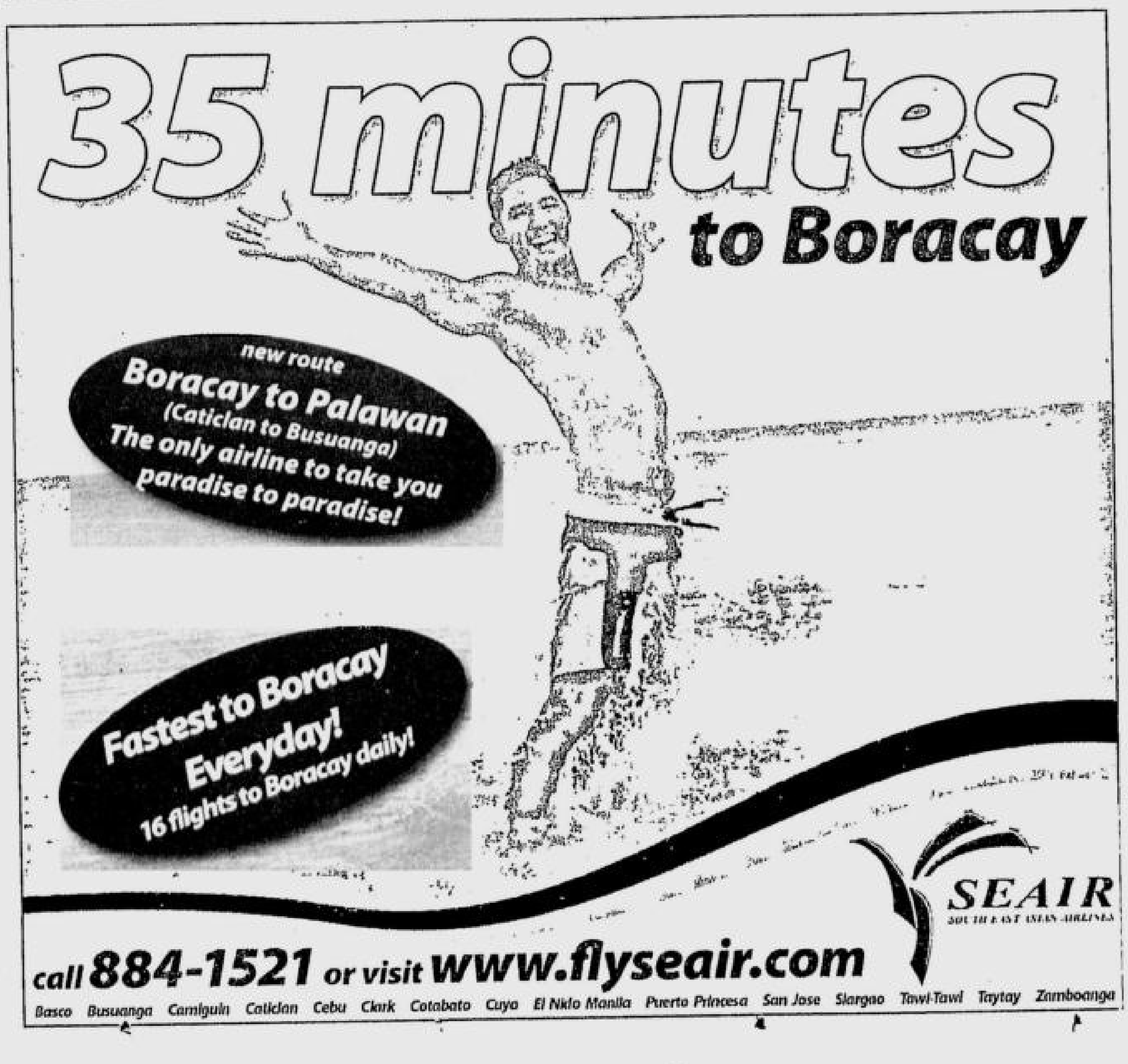
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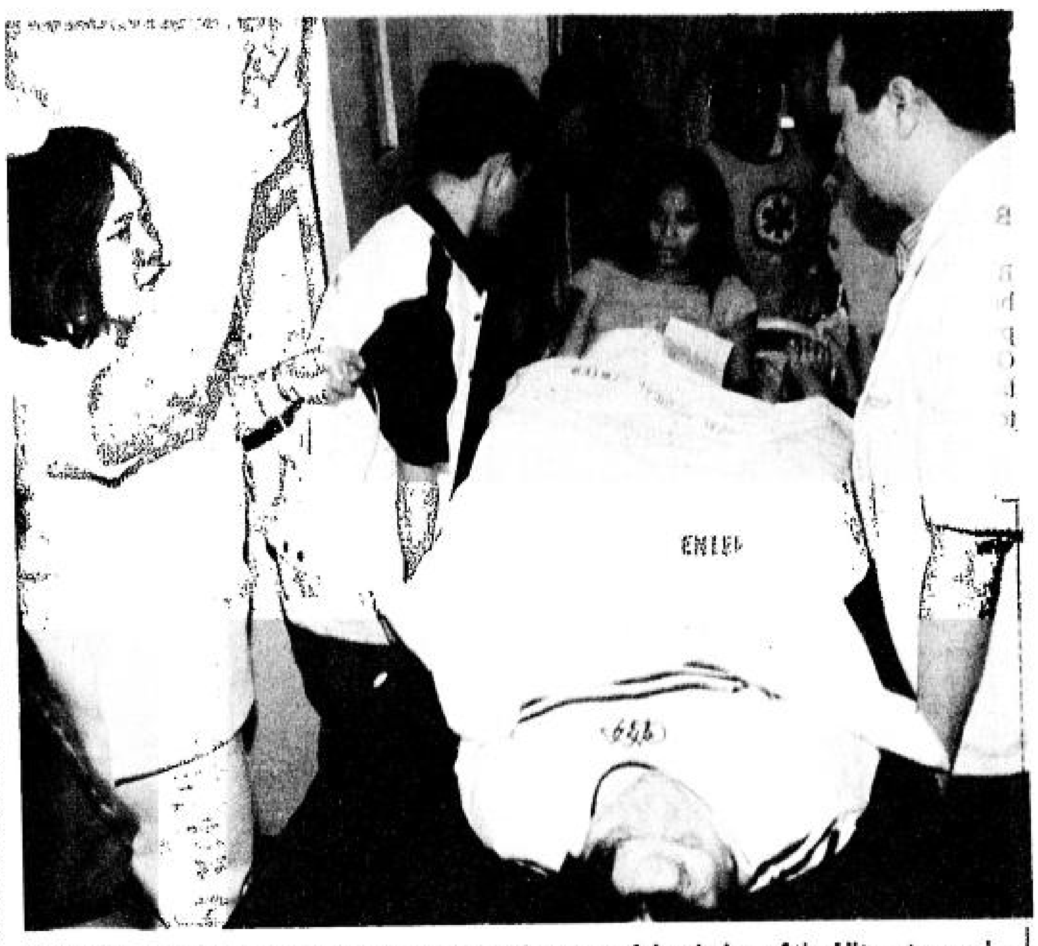

RIZAL Medical Center staff and volunteers assist some of the victims of the Ultra stampede. REM ZAMORA

Deadly stampede also brings out best in people

From page A1

Blue, the alert level for situations where more than 20 casualties are expected.

When the stampede of people struggling to get into the PhilSports Arena so they could watch the "Wowowee" television extravaganza started, the surgeon department had two physicians on duty.

All hands on deck

Immediately, all available doctors from the other units were called in to assist at the emergency center. Nurses and doctors winding up their shift that hour chose to stay. They knew they were needed.

Surgeons who were off duty were told to report to work.

Before long, more than three dozen doctors, nurses and nursing aides—excluding volunteers—were shuffling from patient to patient.

During the first half hour, several decisions had to be made at once inside and outside the emergency unit, according to Dr. Aldwin Tadigue, the senior surgeon on duty.

Control needed

Where do you put the severely injured? How about those with minor injuries?

People had begun crowding onto the hospital grounds. Some form of control was needed to keep them from interfering with the staff.

Reporters and cameramen, too, started swarming in. Patiently, doctors and nurses recounted to them what had happened.

Dr. Aldwin Adique and a team of surgeons were having their morning meals when the first batch of patients was brought in.

Handling disasters

Soon, the emergency unit was crawling with men and women in white gowns.

"The doctors from the other units were put in charge of those who sustained minor injuries. Doctors from the surgery and internal medicine attended to the severely injured," Adique said.

The RMC, which employs around 500 people and has 300 beds, is no stranger to handling disaster situations.

Its staff took care of the victims of a stampede also at the same sports complex more than a year ago. Its doctors and nurses also attended to flood victims flown in from Central and Northern Luzon in 2004.

Day ends in a smile

On Saturday, even interns from the pediatric department had their hands full. Jezreel Culata, Charon Comia and Maricel Pedro looked after patients who suffered most severe internal injuries and fractures.

Before the day ended, the hospital would have treated more than 300 people from the stampede site, majority of them women.

Toward sundown, one exhausted nurse gave a smile when two women asked him for assistance.

"It's just another day. To help is our job," he said.

Opposition leader bugging Palace, Gonzales says

From page A1

on Friday that in two or three weeks, he would try to name the opposition leader and those involved in an alleged new destabilization plot against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Everything will be clear in two to three weeks," he said, indicating that an investigation was ongoing. "This one person is bugging us all."

Gonzales said authorities found out two months ago about the activity but he declined to elaborate.

Well-disguised equipment

Replying to a reporter's question, Gonzales said Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former Philippine National Police chief, was not behind the alleged bugging.

Gonzales said the unnamed opposition politician was using a sophisticated equipment that was well-disguised. He did not give details.

His disclosure came amid a still unresolved wiretapping controversy that nearly unseated Ms Arroyo last year. This allegedly involved tapped phone conversations between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

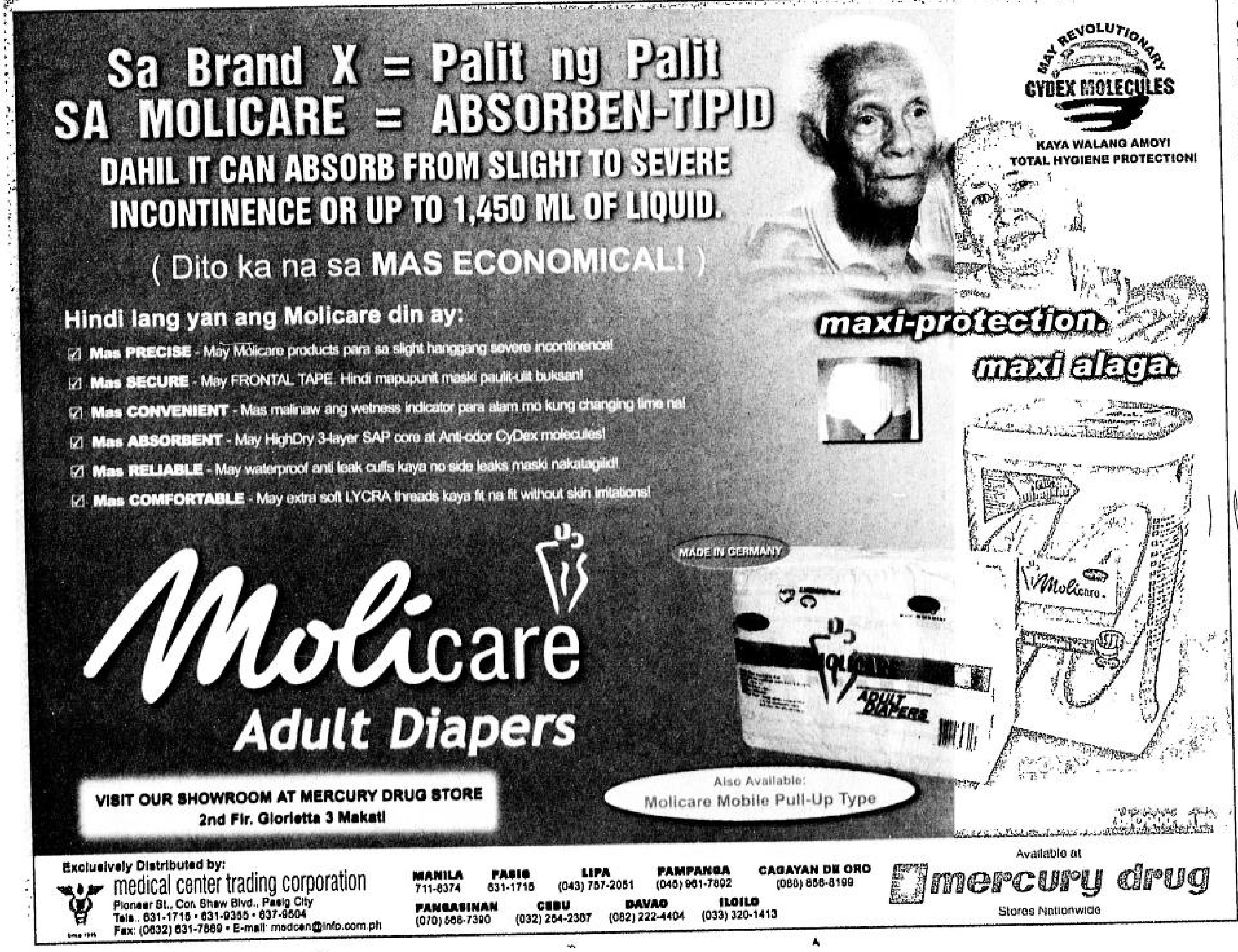
The opposition said the recordings were evidence Ms Arroyo attempted to manipulate the 2004 presidential election. Ms Arroyo denies the charge.

New plot

Last month, Gonzales disclosed a new plot to destabilize the government following the escape from detention of four junior military officers who joined the failed Oakwood mutiny in July 2003.

He said the mutineers' escape was part of the plot, which included a plan to assassinate Ms Arroyo and other Cabinet members.

"A group coming from various forces is trying to form some loose alliance to jointly overthrow the government," Gonzales said last month. He noted that the alliance included members of the radical Left and members of the Magdalo group.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Measly loot for bank robbers in QC

By DJ Yap

BURGLARS BROKE INTO A branch of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) Family Bank in Quezon City over the weekend but failed to open either its vault or Automated Teller Machine (ATM).

Their attempt was not a complete loss, however, since they made off with a guard's service firearm.

The break-in occurred between Friday midnight and 10 a.m. on Saturday at the bank's Roosevelt Branch in Barangay San Antonio, according to a report of the criminal investigation division of the Quezon City Police District.

Branch manager Ellen Tiqui told police that one of their employees, Teodoro Salonga Jr., was about to check on the ATM machine when he noticed that things inside the bank were in disarray. He immediately called the police.

Investigators saw that the window at the back of the bank had been forcibly opened. They also discovered an acetylene torch, a crow bar and a manual drill on the floor.

But the vault and ATM had not been opened, the police said.

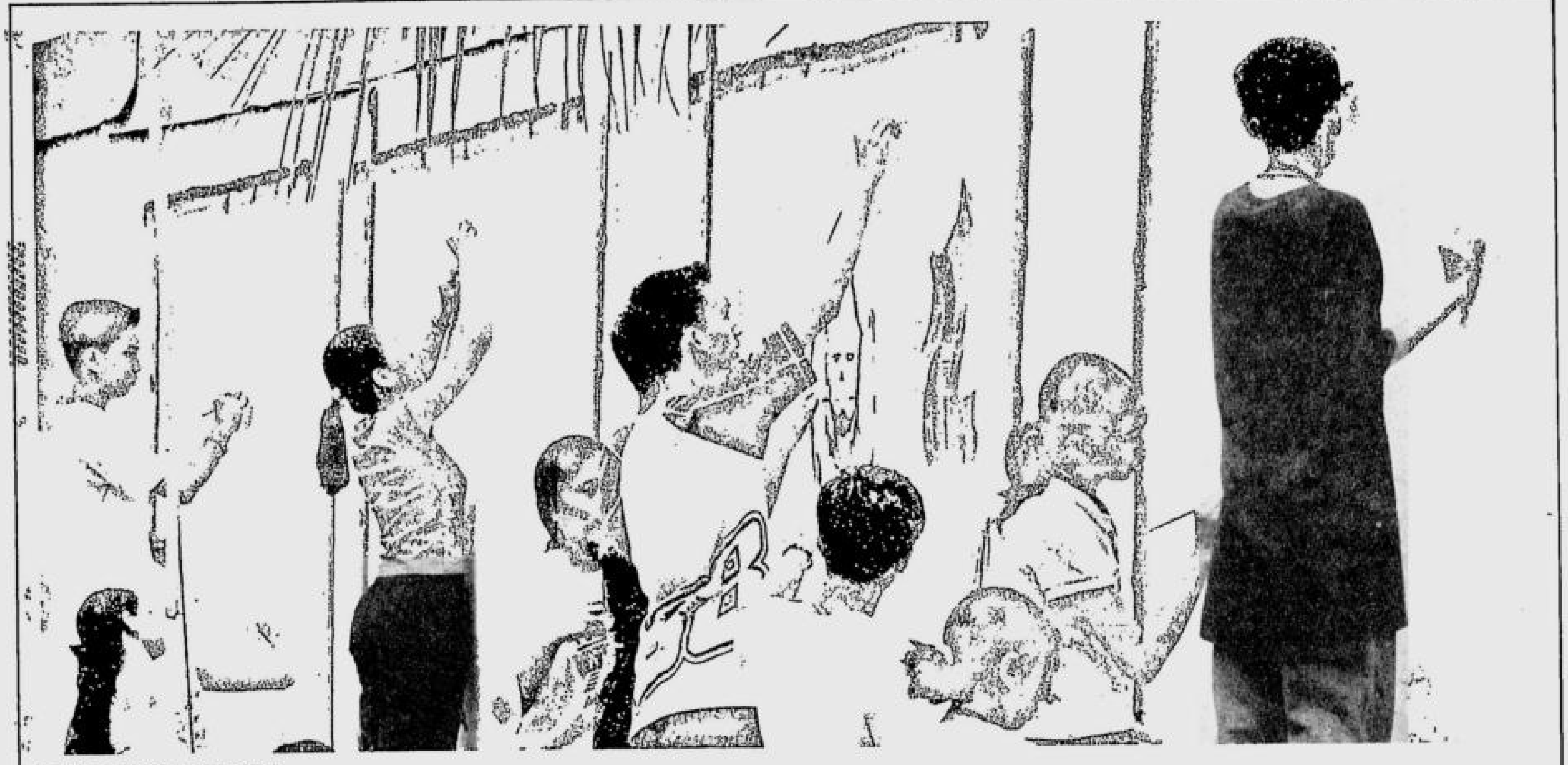
A .38 caliber revolver (Armscor) owned by the bank's security agency was discovered missing from one of the drawers where it had been kept, PO2 Ernesto Fabre said in his report.

The police said they are looking for one of the suspects identified as Norberto Cayetano, of 29 Barangay Sta. Cruz, San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan,

On Feb. 1, Cayetano rented a room in a building owned by Jaime Amparado, which was beside the bank.

When the police examined Cayetano's room, they saw that the window grills had been destroyed, apparently to enable the suspects to scale the building and enter the bank through a window in the back.

Scene-of-the-crime operatives also discovered a bolt-cutter, a flashlight and candles inside Cayetano's rented room.



BUDDING ARTISTS
High school students show their artistic talents as they paint on walls along UN Avenue in Manila to come up with the most beautiful mural. The students are participants in the 3rd Pinoy-Tsinoy Mural Painting competition.
ERIK ARAZAS

Goat meat eaters warned

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE CHOPPED GOAT MEAT THAT YOU BUY may turn out to be dog's meat.

An animal welfare group yesterday warned the public that some unscrupulous traders have been mixing dog meat with chopped goat's meat to make more money.

"Our surveillance shows that some goat slaughterhouses practice this because goat meat is more expensive than dog's," Animal Kingdom Foundation Inc. (AKF) officer in charge Suzanne Llanera said in a phone interview.

The meat of both animals also taste similar when cooked, Llanera added.

"Unless you analyze the animals' bones, you would not know the difference between goat and dog meat," she said.

The AKF official said one way through which the public can avoid being duped is to buy a live goat instead of settling for meat that has already been chopped.

AKF officials had earlier warned the public against eating dog meat following the death of a 4-year-old girl.

Ressia Mae Edoria, of Barangay Molobolo, Cauayan, Negros Occidental, died last December of rabies and encephalitis, days after neighbors gave her dog meat cooked as *pulutan* (appetizer).

AKF chief veterinarian Winston Samaniego said the rabies virus may have entered the girl's system though a tooth cavity. When a person eats or chews the meat of a dog infected with rabies, the virus enters the nerve endings though a cavity, a loose tooth or a cut in the gums, he added.

The virus then passes through the lymph nodes and multiplies in the brain, resulting in the victim's death. Samaniego said the virus ultimately damages the central nervous system, which includes the brain and spinal cord.

The veterinarian said the typical incubation period for rabies could be as short as four to six weeks or as long as one to five years.

Iranian, Brit tourist lose Rolex watches to thieves

By Tarra V. Quismundo
and Margaux C. Ortiz

TWO FOREIGNERS LOST THEIR ROLEX watches and other valuables to thieves in separate incidents yesterday.

One of the victims was an Iranian identified as Medi Nasrabadi, a resident of One Roxas Triangle in Barangay Urdaneta, Makati.

Nasrabadi was doing some brisk walking at around 8 a.m. along Paseo de Roxas, when a motorcycle with three men on board stopped beside him.

PO2 Rico Caramat, case investigator from the Makati Police Department's Theft and Robbery section, said the robbers may have been trailing Nasrabadi for some time.

Caramat said the robbers, who were wearing helmets, took out a gun and demanded the victim's valuables. A brief struggle ensued but the robbers overcame the Iranian and took his Rolex Yacht-Master watch.

Internet sources showed that the 18-carat gold Yacht-Master sells from $8,900 (close to half a million pesos) to $17,700 (more than P900,000).

The robbers also took the Iranian's necklace and ring and sped off toward Gil Puyat Avenue.

The other victim was a British tourist who fell prey to two robbers posing as *calesa* drivers in Quiapo, Manila.

Patrolling policemen, however, were able to arrest suspects Martin Mergurio, 19, of 499 Dandan St. Tondo, and Rommel Daligid, 19, of Perla St., Tondo, shortly after they divested Deanien McDave, 27, of his Rolex watch and P4,000 in cash.

Police said the victim, who was staying at the Lotus Garden Hotel on Mabini Street in Ermita, Manila, took the *calesa* from Binondo at 5:15 a.m. yesterday.

When they reached Carlos Palanca Street in Quiapo, one of the suspects stopped the *calesa*, saying the horse needed to drink.

The suspects then took out a knife and asked the victim to hand over his cash and watch, the police said.

Nearby law enforcers, however, noticed the commotion and came to McDave's aid and arrested the robbers.

But none of the victim's valuables were recovered from the suspects. The police said that the suspects may have passed them on to their other cohorts.

Cop: Jealousy led to shooting

By Margaux C. Ortiz

LAST FRIDAY'S SHOOTING INCIDENT AT A popular fast food restaurant in Manila that led to the death of two of its managerial staff was apparently work-related, according to the police.

"Interviews with McDonald's employees revealed that professional jealousy may have been the main reason behind the killing," PO2 Rommel del Rosario of the Manila Police District Homicide Section said.

Suspect Luis Perez, an assistant manager at McDonald's Taft Avenue, committed suicide after shooting his boss Olive Fernandez twice in the face shortly before a staff meeting.

Del Rosario said the suspect may have resented Fernandez's recent promotion as manager of the McDonald's franchise beside the De La Salle University.

"His coworkers said Perez worked at the branch longer than the victim did," the policeman added.

The investigator said that Fernandez had often reprimanded the suspect for being negligent at work.

"The victim's husband said he heard Fernandez scolding the victim on the phone a week before the shooting incident happened," Del Rosario said.

The restaurant's employees told police investigators that Perez arrived at the branch at 1:55 p.m. last Friday, a few minutes before the staff meeting was about to start.

The suspect went straight to Fernandez's small office beside the kitchen and shot her twice, hitting her left cheekbone with a 9 mm pistol.

Perez then climbed to the roof and shot himself in the forehead, Del Rosario said.

Hospital renovation finished

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE RENOVATION OF THE 30-YEAR-OLD main building of the Mandaluyong City Medical Center has finally been completed, with city residents to benefit from better facilities and bigger rooms.

The hospital on Boni Avenue, just meters away from the City Hall, has increased its bed capacity from less than a hundred to at least 200, the city public information said.

The city government spent more than P38 million for the renovation of the old building, which is scheduled to be inaugurated today.

"Our residents will no longer have to transfer to other expensive hospitals because we have new facilities," public information officer Lee Alvarez-Chan told the INQUIRER.

The renovated hospital now has a dialysis room, a medical intensive care unit (ICU), a pediatric ICU, a neo-natal ICU, enhanced operating, labor and recovery rooms, a surgical ward and an expanded outpatient department.

The hospital also added new operating tables, ICU beds, anesthesia machines, incubators, hemo-dialysis machines, cardiac monitors, suction machines and pulse oximeters.

Mayor Neptali Gonzales II also ordered the release of P20 million to buy additional equipment for the hospital.

Mandaluyong traffic rerouted

IN LINE WITH THE WEEK-LONG CELEBRATION of Mandaluyong City's 61st Liberation Day and 12th cityhood anniversary, traffic will be rerouted in certain areas to give way to events beginning today until Feb. 9.

No vehicles will be allowed today on the northbound lane of Boni Avenue in front of the Mandaluyong City Medical Center from 5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. A special flag raising ceremony will be held in the area in connection with the inaugural blessing of the newly renovated main building of the city hospital.

On Tuesday, the Nueve de Febrero Street will be closed from 7 a.m. to noon to give way to the groundbreaking ceremony for the annex building of the Nueve de Febrero Elementary School.

This will be followed by a commemorative program at the city's Liberation Marker on Kalentong Street on Feb. 9. Authorities will close off Panaderos and Kalentong Streets from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. At 2 p.m., the city's annual civic parade will begin, starting from Don Bosco College and passing through Shaw Boulevard, A. Bonifacio, A. Luna, and Rev. Aglipay Streets, the western portion of Boni Avenue, and Maysilo Circle.

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Beware of 'nameless' enforcers

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IF A TRAFFIC ENFORCER FLAGS YOU DOWN for a violation and his name isn't displayed on his uniform, it's all right to get suspicious, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) told the public yesterday.

"If you see that enforcers are covering their namecloth, you can readily assume that they have bad intentions. If you are apprehended by one, just allow them to issue a ticket instead of bribing them, and we will trace their identity," MMDA Traffic Operations Center (TOC) Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said over radio station dzBB.

The namecloth is a strip of cloth which shows the initial of the traffic enforcer's first name and his full surname. It should be displayed on the chest, over the left pocket of the enforcer's uniform.

"If you have any complaints about traffic enforcers, you can tell us. You can receive your citation ticket under protest and bring your case before the adjudication board. But you should avoid getting into a confrontation with them," Vergel de Dios said.

Antonio Pagulayan, chief of the MMDA Roadside Traffic Arbitration and Personnel Inspection and Monitoring Group, said the agency has been implementing strict rules on proper decorum among its enforcers, including prohibiting them from concealing their identity.

"The namecloth is there so that if there are complaints against traffic enforcers, they can be easily identified by motorists, for instance, if they were misbehaving or if their apprehension was questionable," Pagulayan told the INQUIRER.

The MMDA TOC has about 1,700 traffic enforcers, a number that constantly changes with the dismissal of errant enforcers and the recruitment of new ones.

"As they say, it's hire and fire. We fire those that have committed mistakes and hire new ones to replace them," said Pagulayan.

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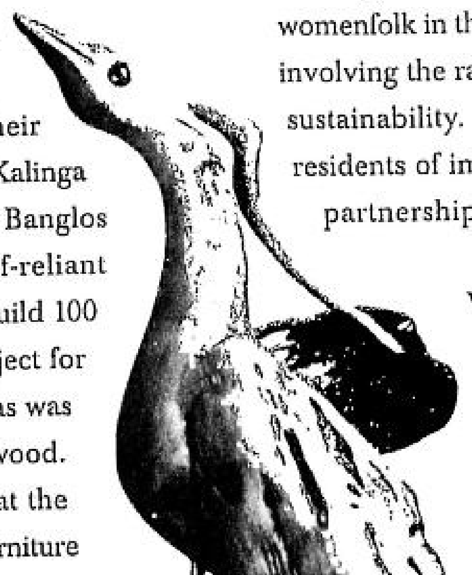

With the help of Haribon Foundation, Banglos residents were also taught how to propagate native forest seedlings. The result: a tree nursery that will help protect future generations from similar calamities and provide added income for the womenfolk in the community. In addition, Smart helped set up a livelihood program involving the raising of organic chickens as part of its environmental campaign for sustainability. The installation of an emergency warning system that will alert residents of impending floods is another undertaking that Smart is supporting in partnership with the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

With the help of friends, Marvic and the people of Banglos are making a new beginning.

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Bulls repulse Kings, join Giants in Finals

GAMES WEDNESDAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:40 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs. Air21 (For 3rd place)
7:25 p.m.—Purefoods Giants vs. Red Bull

By June Navarro

RED BULL ENDED A GAME-long rally by Barangay Ginebra with back-to-back triples down the stretch to win, 83-79, last night and reach the finals of the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Celino Cruz gave the lead back to the Bulls with a long jumper, 76-75, with a minute 22 seconds left, shortly after the Kings had pulled ahead for the first time through import Chris Porter, 75-73.

Then James Penny, hobbled by fouls since the second quarter, came up with another three-pointer with 47.7 seconds to go, 79-75, following a miss by Eric Menk.

The Kings threatened for the last time at 79-81 but Jayjay Helterbrand missed a hurried jumper and Cruz ended the scoring with two free throws with barely a second left to play.

The Bulls, who clinched the best-of-seven semifinal series, 4 games to 3, will meet the Purefoods Chunkee Giants starting Wednesday in another best-of-seven for the championship.

RED BULL'S Topex Robinson (center) makes a back pass at the last minute off Ginebra's Mark Caguioa (left) and Erik Menk. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Despite getting almost no help from Penny, the Bulls set the pace and led by as many as 12 points twice, the last at 62-50 late in the third quarter.

Execution was so tight for the Gin Kings right after the opening tip that the Bulls wasted no time building a 21-14 lead, highlighted by Topex Robinson's pair of three-pointers.

When Ginebra finally loosened up, Menk and Rodney Santos fueled the attack with timely jumpers and incursions as the Kings tied the count at 29 following a 10-2 run.

Penny caught a barreling Porter on the arm, after only two minutes in the second quarter, fetching his third foul that forced Guiao to bench the Red Bull import for a long period of time.

As Penny rode the bench, Ginebra's frontline trio of Rommel Adducul, Porter and Menk were quick enough to exploit mismatches inside as the Bulls left the job of defending the paint to Mick Pennisi and Rico Villanueva.

Menk squeezed out seven of his 11 first-half points out of the mismatch while opening up the perimeter for Rodney Santos, who had eight points in the first half.

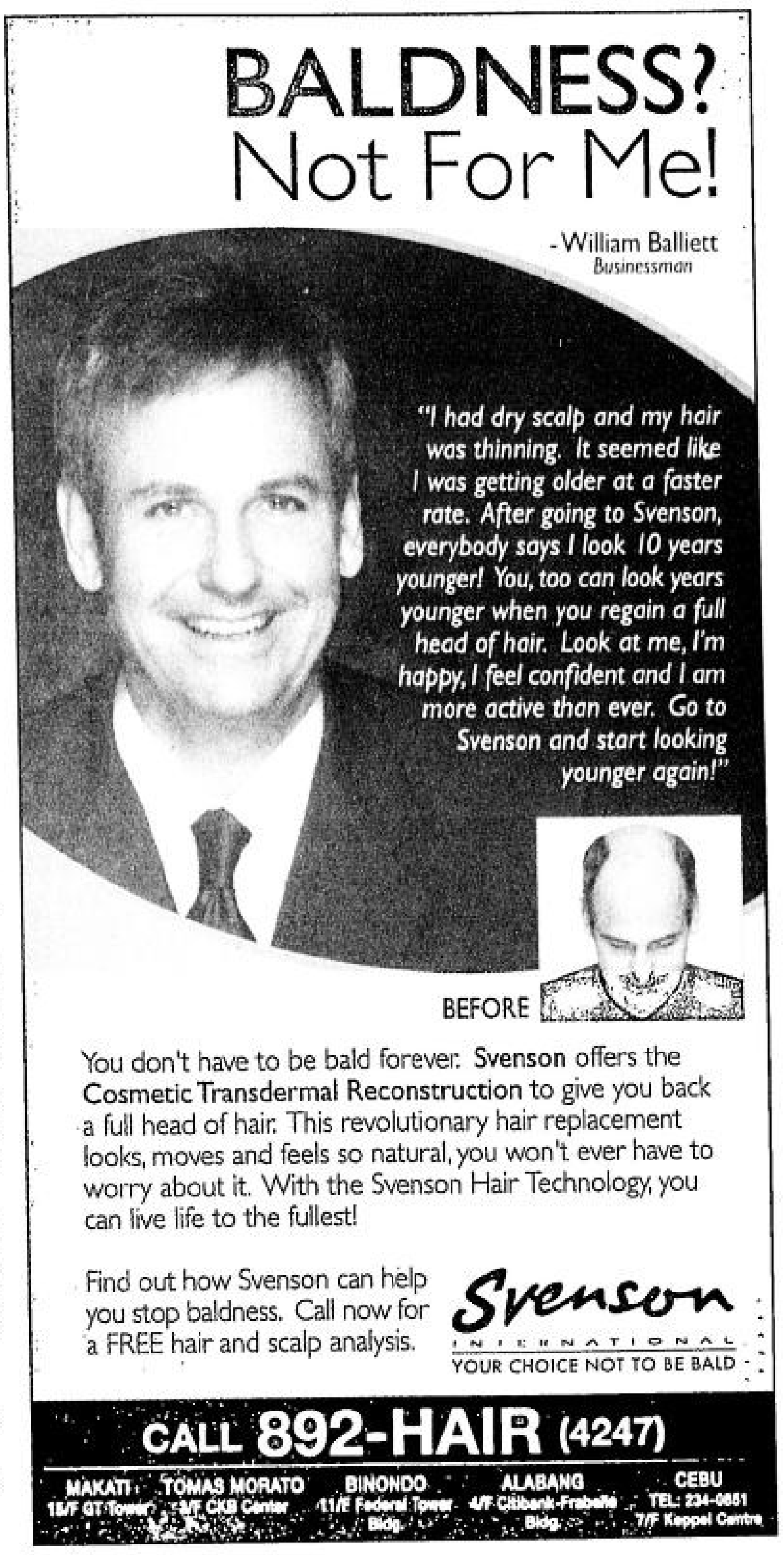
The sizeable pro-Ginebra crowd became a factor during the Kings' second-quarter run, but Junthy Valenzuela silenced them by scoring seven of the Bulls' last 11 points, including a three-point play off Porter, that gave the Bulls a 40-37 halftime lead.

The scores:

RED BULL 83—Tugade 18, Penny 14, Valenzuela 12, Cruz 11, Villanueva 10, Robinson 7, Baguio 6, Pennisi 5, Foancier 0.

GINEBRA 79—Porter 22, Menk 16, Caguio 13, Santos 11, Adducul 8, Helterbrand 6, Dimaunahan 3, Macapagal 0.

Quarters: 21-14, 40-37, 62-56, 83-79.



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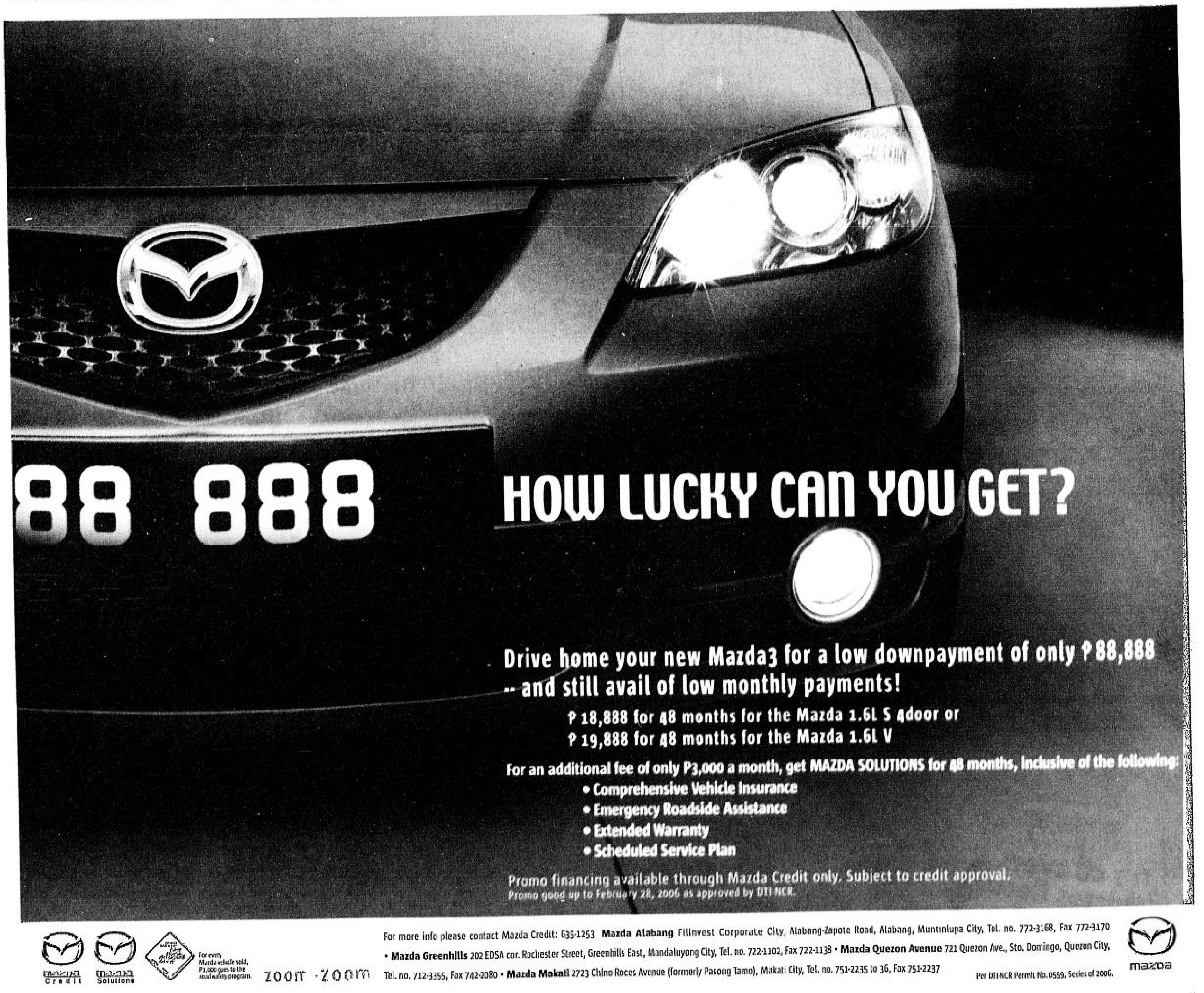

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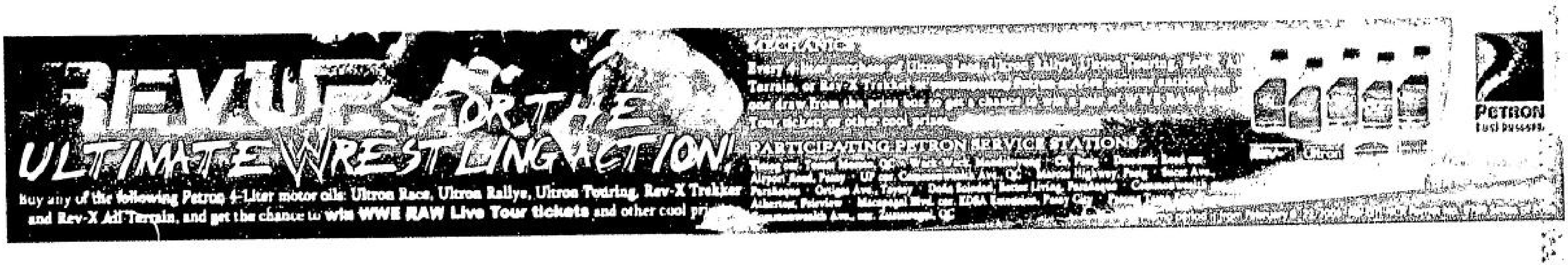

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Painters a win from sweep

By Musong R. Castillo

GAME THURSDAY
(*San Andres Complex*)
3:30 p.m.—Rain or Shine vs. Magnolia
(Game 3 Finals)

THIS SECOND-GENERATION CABATU TRULY KNOWS how to win games.

Junjun Cabatu hit 11 of his 21 points in the final period last night to play hero again for Rain or Shine in a 75-73 Game 2 decision of Magnolia that moved the Elasto Painters within a win of sweeping the PBL Heroes Cup title series.

The 6-foot-5 forward, just four nights after hitting the game-winner in a 70-68 overtime victory in the series opener on Thursday, again took charge when the game was on the line, hitting clutch baskets that put Rain or Shine on the threshold of a seventh league title.

"He has been working hard after the Christmas break," Rain or Shine coach Caloy Garcia said of Cabatu. "I really expected a lot from him at the start of the season, but he kind of took it easy after (the UAAP season with) La Salle."

No team in recent history of the PBL has ever come back from a 0-2 deficit to win a best-of-five series.

Rain or Shine's fourth-quarter brilliance was the complete opposite of how it played the first period, when the Elasto Painters lagged behind by as many as 14 points, 7-21, with Kelly Williams and Arwind Santos hitting shots from inside and out.

But it was clear that Rain or Shine would not let go again after making a game out of it, as Cabatu was joined at the firing end by veteran Eugene Tan and newly crowned Most Valuable Player Jojo Tangkay.

A Tan steal off Kim Valenzuela led to a Cabatu layup, giving Rain or Shine a 70-67 lead with 61 seconds left.

Cabatu's insurance charities made it 74-68.

Tangkay won the MVP over Hapee's Jason Castro with a total of 344.80 statistical points. He also made it to mythical First Five together with Williams, Santos, Rain or Shine teammate Jay-R Reyes and Castro.

The scores:

RAIN OR SHINE 75—Cabatu 21, Ortiguerra 13, Tan 12, Tangkay 9, Enrile 9, Sta. Maria 5, Sagad 4, Reyes 2, Aljamal 0.

MAGNOLIA 73—Williams 24, Santos 17, Co 12, Islp 10, Rizada 5, Chan 3, Misolas 2, Valenzuela 0, Te 0, Bombeo 0.

Quarters: 12-21, 32-39, 54-56, 75-73

Primero sprints to 3rd place in Langkawi Tour

MALAYSIA—ALBERT PRIMERO OF THE PAGcor-Casino Filipino pro cycling squad moved up to third place in Stage 2 of the Asian category of the TM Le Tour de Langkawi by finishing second twice in the sprints Saturday. The 28-year-old Primero showed his sprinting prowess as he came in second to Japanese Koji Fukushima twice. He garnered six points for the day and vaulted from 27th to third place in the Asian Rider Overall classification after the 164.7-km race from Tanjung Malim that ended at Sitiawan here. Primero arrived in a big bunch that included Asian category pacesetter Takashi Miyazawa and No. 2 Indon Wawan Setyo Budi and Pagcor teammates Merculio Ramos, Victor Espiritu, Bernard Luzon, Sherwin Diamsay and Sherwin Carrera. After two stages, Primero stood seven minutes and 26 seconds behind Miyazawa.

Suico kayoes rival; Tuñacao pulls thru

ORIENTAL AND PACIFIC BOXING Boxing Federation champions Randy "Komong Bato" Suico and Malcolm Tuñacao kept their respective titles in contrasting fashions yesterday in Nagoya, Japan.

Suico, the OPBF super featherweight king, lived up to his reputation as a puncher by stopping Ryuhei Sugita of Japan in two minutes 39 seconds of the fourth round.

But bantamweight champ Malcolm Tuñacao barely kept his title after a split draw with challenger Kohei Ohba in the 12-round co-feature of the card held at the Nagoya International Conference Hall.

An Australian judge had Tuñacao the winner 115-114, a Japanese judge saw Ohba the victor at 115-113, while Filipino Teddy Alivio had it a draw at 115-115.

Tuñacao, however, vehemently protested the outcome, saying he was the clear victor and that the majority of fans criticized the verdict.

"I thought I deserved to win that fight," Tuñacao told this writer after the fight. "My opponent had no answer to my punches."

Rodel Mayol, the undefeated Filipino fighter who was at ringside, also said Tuñacao was the clear winner.

Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor

2nd Caddies' Open tourney this month

CALATAGAN, BATANGAS—THE SECOND STAGING OF THE NATIONAL CADDIES' Open could end up as a fight for regional supremacy with bets from the Visayas and Luzon out to dislodge their noted counterparts from Mindanao. "This could provide an interesting sidelight to the tournament," said tournament co-chair Hermie Esguerra. Davao's Jonel Ababa and brothers Mario and Joseph Labajo topped last year's initial staging. Nomination forms can be faxed or hand-carried to the NCO secretariat in Calatagan (fax 0919- 5470619) or Wack Wack (02-7238556) on or before Feb. 10. For inquiries, call (0917) 8425275 or (0917) 8425257.

ANI De Leon (left) hugs men's winner Arland Macasieb after crossing the finish.

SEAG medalists just too tough to handle

By Jasmine W. Payo

MEXICO, PAMPANGA—THE VETERANS AGAIN dominated the 2006 National Triathlon Championship yesterday.

Junior challengers tipped to put up a fight faded in the end as the thirtysomethings—led by Southeast Asian Games bronze medalists Arland Macasieb and Ani de Leon—ruled the arduous 1.5K swim-40K bike-10K run competition at The Lakeshore resort here.

"It was a hard win," said Macasieb, who bagged his second straight title in the men's event with a time of 2 hours, 11 minutes and 17 seconds.

De Leon dominated the women's division by clocking 2:27.33.

"When I saw the course, I had a very good feeling about it," said De Leon, who also claimed the title in 2002 and 2003. "But the junior athletes are also improving, they're gaining experience."

Macasieb and silver medalist Noel Salvador initially trailed 18-year-old Mikki Quilala in the swim race, but the seasoned entries took over in the bike and run legs.

The 33-year-old Salvador timed 2:12.37 while Japanese Hiroshi Takei, also 33, took third in 2:13.55.

De Leon edged SEAG silver medalist and last year's champion Sandra Araullo by less than a minute (2:28.02). Third placer LC Langit completed the race in 2:33.12.

Macasieb trailed Salvador in the swim leg by more than a minute and by seven minutes in the bike stage. But the New Jersey-based triathlete surged ahead in the footrace.

The 30-year-old Macasieb staged his strong final push by completing the 10K run in 30.31 minutes, more than 10 minutes faster than Salvador's time of 41.16.

"I know I'm capable, I know I'm a fast runner," he said. "And it turned out to be a running race."

De Leon and Araullo also pulled away in the bike and run contests after trailing the 20-year-old Langit in the swim leg.

The top finishers secured RP team slots in the Asian Triathlon Championship in China and in the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, this year.

Other winners include 13-year-old Joash Serrano (1:11.03) and 15-year-old Kim Mangrobang (1:21.36) in the sprint distance.

Morales rejects Pacquiao conquest

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

ERIK MORALES DOESN'T BELIEVE HE HAD been vanquished by Manny Pacquiao in their second encounter in Las Vegas last month.

That's for sure. Otherwise, the proud boxer fondly called the Aztec Warrior by his countryman would've not challenged Pacquiao to a third encounter.

He doesn't say it, but after acknowledging Pacquiao as a younger, hungrier fighter, Morales has appeared convinced it was the weighing scales that had beaten him at the Thomas & Mack Center on Jan. 21.

Or that he lost to the weighing machine, not to the sharp, blazing punching machine also known as Pacman.

***

For the record, Morales had to lead the sordid life of a hunger striker in the run-up to the rematch with Pacquiao.

While Pacquiao was enjoying princely meals of his choice, chicken *tinola* and fish galore, Morales had to rely on pauper's fare while training for the rematch.

So did we ever hear Morales admit that Pacquiao was the better boxer in their second fight?

Stronger, maybe. Faster, yes. But better?

No way. The best compliment Morales could offer was acknowledge Pacquiao had "displayed more control in his attacks."

This fact was relayed to Joaquin Henson of the Philippine Star by Morales publicist Ricardo Jimenez.

***

Morales would not admit that the Filipino boxing great he met for the second time was no longer the easy target that he had described as one-dimensional after their first fight.

There indeed have been tremendous improvements in Pacquiao's arsenal. However, Morales was too proud to credit the sweet transformation displayed by Pacquiao which had resulted in the epic conquest scored by the greatest living Filipino athlete over the Mexican boxing legend.

Morales insists on a third fight. His promoter, Bob Arum, did not tarry and announced a rubber match, possibly in September.

He was beaten by Pacquiao, but Morales has refused to accept defeat.

At least, in Pacquiao's case, he did admit that he had lost to a better fighter last year. Of course, Pacquiao was also quick to state that the result of the first encounter with Morales could've been altogether different if not for a bloody cut which blurred his vision and totally wrecked his ability to properly locate his foe starting the fifth round.

***

In the rematch, Morales had looked demolished and devastated when he was promptly prevented by referee Kenny Bayless in a senseless try to get up after suffering a second knockdown late in the 10th round.

Morales was rushed to the hospital for an immediate check-up. Rumors spread he had either cracked a rib or fractured his jaw.

An immediate rematch was overruled.

But after the Morales camp had announced their man did not suffer any major injury, the selling of a third encounter between the fierce rivals was on.

Naturally, there had been initial misgivings Pacquiao-Morales III would be another sell-out.

But those who distrust the wisdom of holding a rubber match between the Filipino and Mexican rivals have conveniently forgotten the selling genius of Bob Arum, the man who promoted Thrilla in Manila in

MORALES/ A26

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Veteran, first-timer top Bohol Milo run

PENALES: Easy win

TAGBILARAN CITY—Veteran Joseph Penales and first-timer Gin Adan pulled all stops in the final 5 kilometers to top the men's and women's 21K races in the 30th National Milo Marathon eliminations here yesterday.

Penales, who placed second to Rogelio Reli in last year's Cebu City leg, clocked one hour, 21 minutes and 42 seconds in claiming his second leg title after his breakthrough victory in 2002.

The Kawit, Camotes Island-born Adan engaged Genalyn Jaum in a neck-and-neck battle in the first 16 km before soloing it home in 1:46:45.

Penales beat a pair of Camotes runners, Riez Enriquez (1:23:56) and Rodulfo Aguspina (1:23:57), for the men's crown of the race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Cebu Pacific, Adidas and Powerbar and conducted in Bohol for the first time in 30 years.

The three qualified to the 42K national finals set Dec. 10 in Metro Manila.

Also qualifying with Adan, who won P10,000 like Penales, were second placer Jaum (1:50:21) and second runnerup Mylene Jarina (1:50:49).

"Cebu now boasts of strong runners, it's a good thing Bohol hosted the Milo Marathon," said the 26-year-old Penales in Cebuano.

The 18-year-old Adan powered in front with 5 km to go after blisters slowed down Jaum.

Manfred Perez, 15, and Mary Jessamyn Arcales, 13, topped their respective 5K divisions.

Bohol Institute of Technology won the trophy for having the Biggest Delegation, while Central Visayas School of College of Arts, Forestry and Technology won the inter-school team title.

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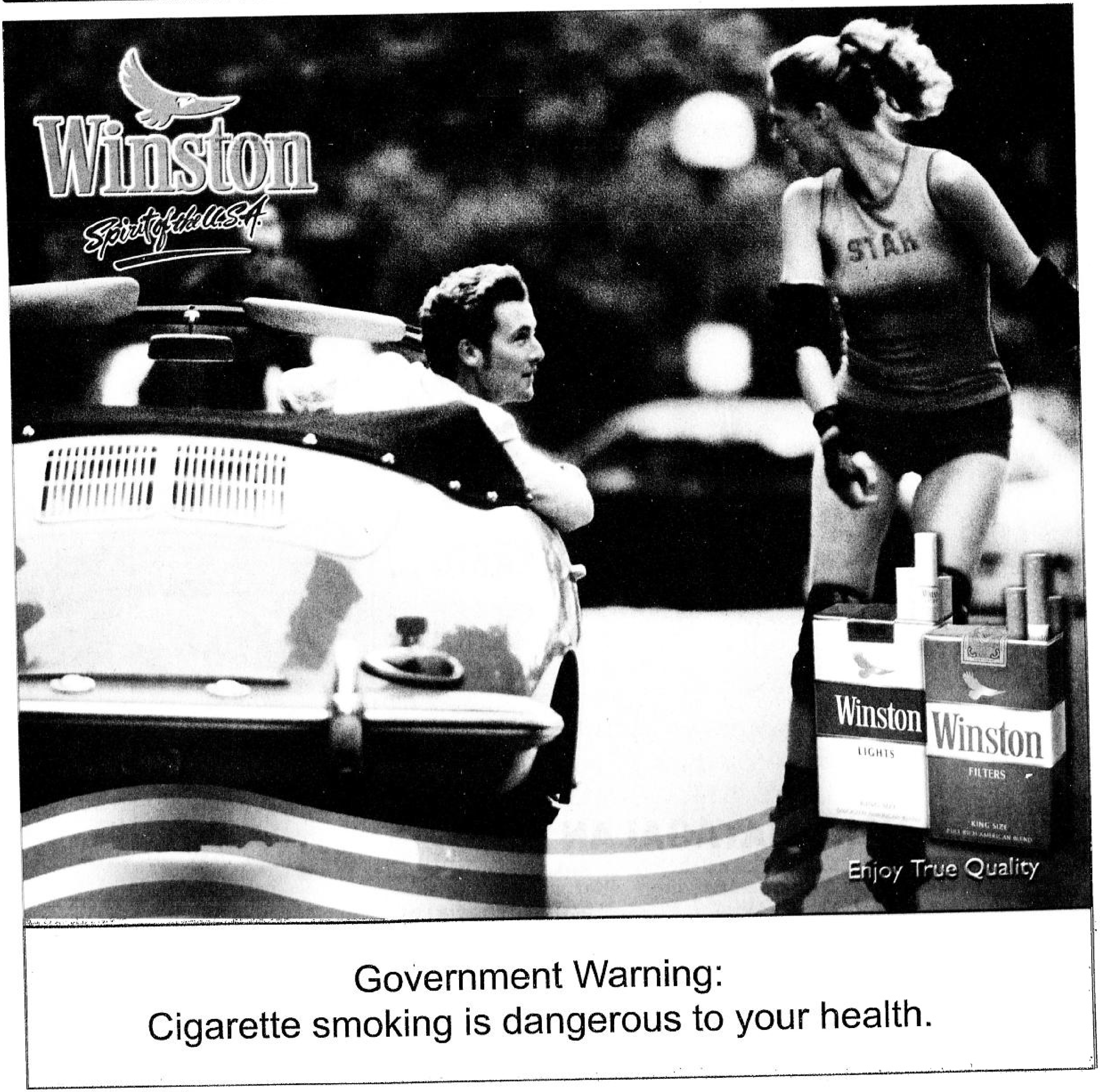

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Super Bowl: Slick offense battles blitz defense today

DETROIT—MIKE HOLMGREN WAS THE quarterbacks' coach and later offensive coordinator of the 49ers in the 1980s, running Bill Walsh's west coast offense.

Dick LeBeau was the Bengals' defensive coordinator trying to devise ways to stop the rhythmic passing game that would become the rage in the NFL.

During a cross-country airplane ride, LeBeau scribbled some ideas on a napkin, and the zone blitz was born.

LeBeau, 68, and in his second stint as Steelers defensive coordinator, deploys an elaborate scheme based on ever-changing fronts with three down linemen and four linebackers. Safeties, cornerbacks and linebackers blitz the quarterback with linemen dropping into coverage.

LeBeau revealed the scheme in 1989 against Holmgren and the 49ers in Super Bowl XXIII. The Bengals lost 20-16 when Joe Montana led an 11-play, 92-yard touchdown drive in the closing minutes. But LeBeau's zone blitz was here to stay.

Holmgren's offense has evolved over the years, but it relies heavily on the principles of the west coast attack. LeBeau has quick, versatile players such as linebacker Joey Porter and safety Troy Polamalu who are equally dangerous rushing the passer as in coverage.

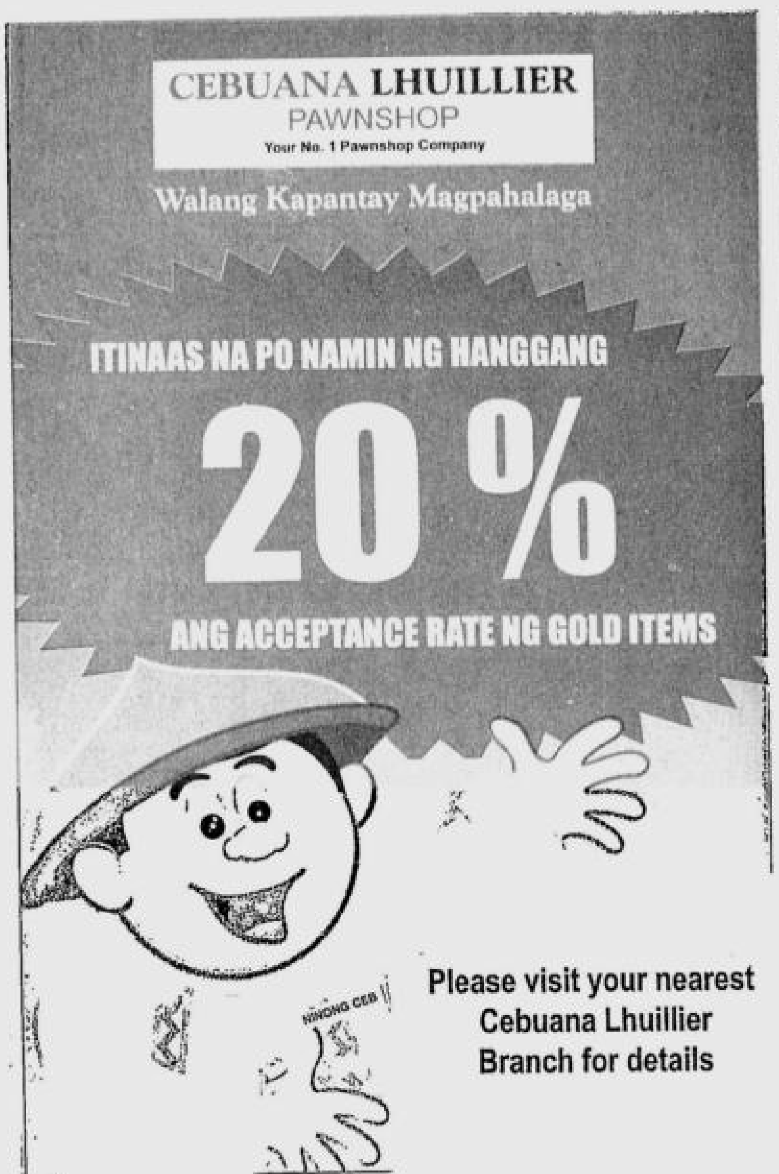
"They are built defensively first, but we are built offensively first," Seahawks offensive coordinator Gil Haskell said. "So that's a hell of a battle right there."

So who has the edge?

Consider the wreckage the Steelers defense has left behind in the playoffs. It knocked Bengals quarterback Carson Palmer out of the game early in a 31-17 victory. Then it toppled the two hottest quarterbacks in the AFC, the Colts' Peyton Manning (21-18) and the Broncos' Jake Plummer (34-17).

Because of the Steelers' ability to disguise their blitzes, the Seahawks' offensive line, running backs and receivers will have to be on their game. *NYT News Service*

Super Bowl on TV: ESPN—7 a.m. live, 8:30 p.m. replay; Sports Plus—7 a.m. live, 7 p.m. replay (1 p.m. replay on Feb. 12)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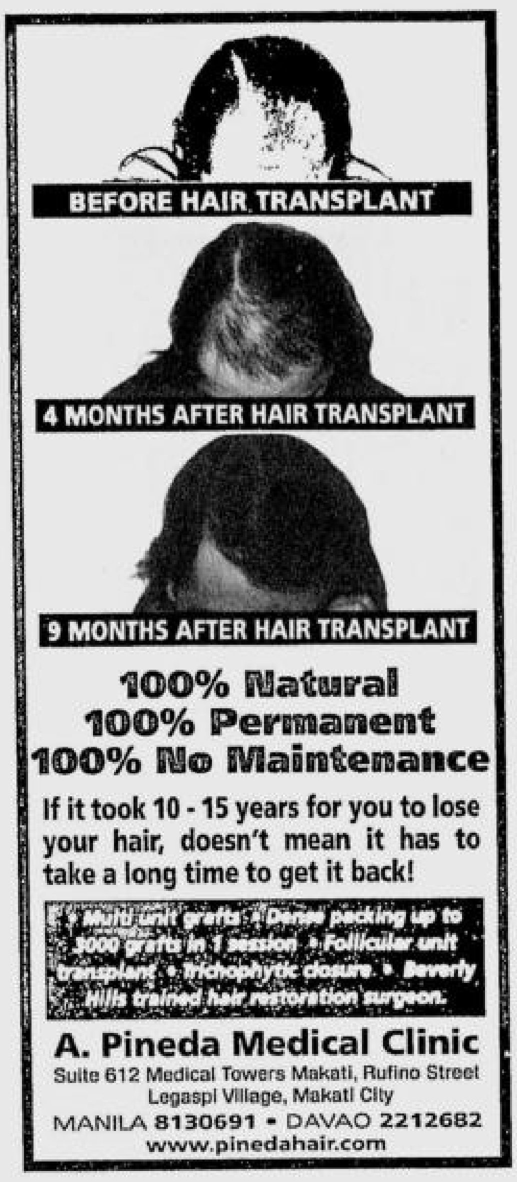
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Carter helps Nets snap Heat streak

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY—Vince Carter had his second career triple-double with 28 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists Saturday to lead the New Jersey Nets past the Miami Heat, 105-92.

Richard Jefferson added 26 points and Clifford Robinson scored a season-high 23 in a rare start for the Nets (24-21), who won their 10th straight home game.

Miami (29-19), which had its four-game winning streak snapped, trailed the entire game. Dwyane Wade led the Heat with 31 points and Shaquille O'Neal was held to 11, his fourth-lowest total of the season.

In other games, Washington whipped Atlanta, 98-85; Orlando tripped Boston, 100-91; Philadelphia nicked Cleveland, 100-95; Indiana suprised Detroit, 93-85; New Orleans upset the LA Lakers, 106-90; Milwaukee dumped Memphis, 88-78; Dallas routed Seattle, 110-91; Phoenix clubbed Chicago, 118-101; Denver nipped Portland, 105-104 and Golden State crushed Minnesota, 109-77.

CARTER REUTERS

In Orlando, Florida, Dwight Howard and Steve Francis each scored 18 points, as the Magic beat the Boston Celtics.

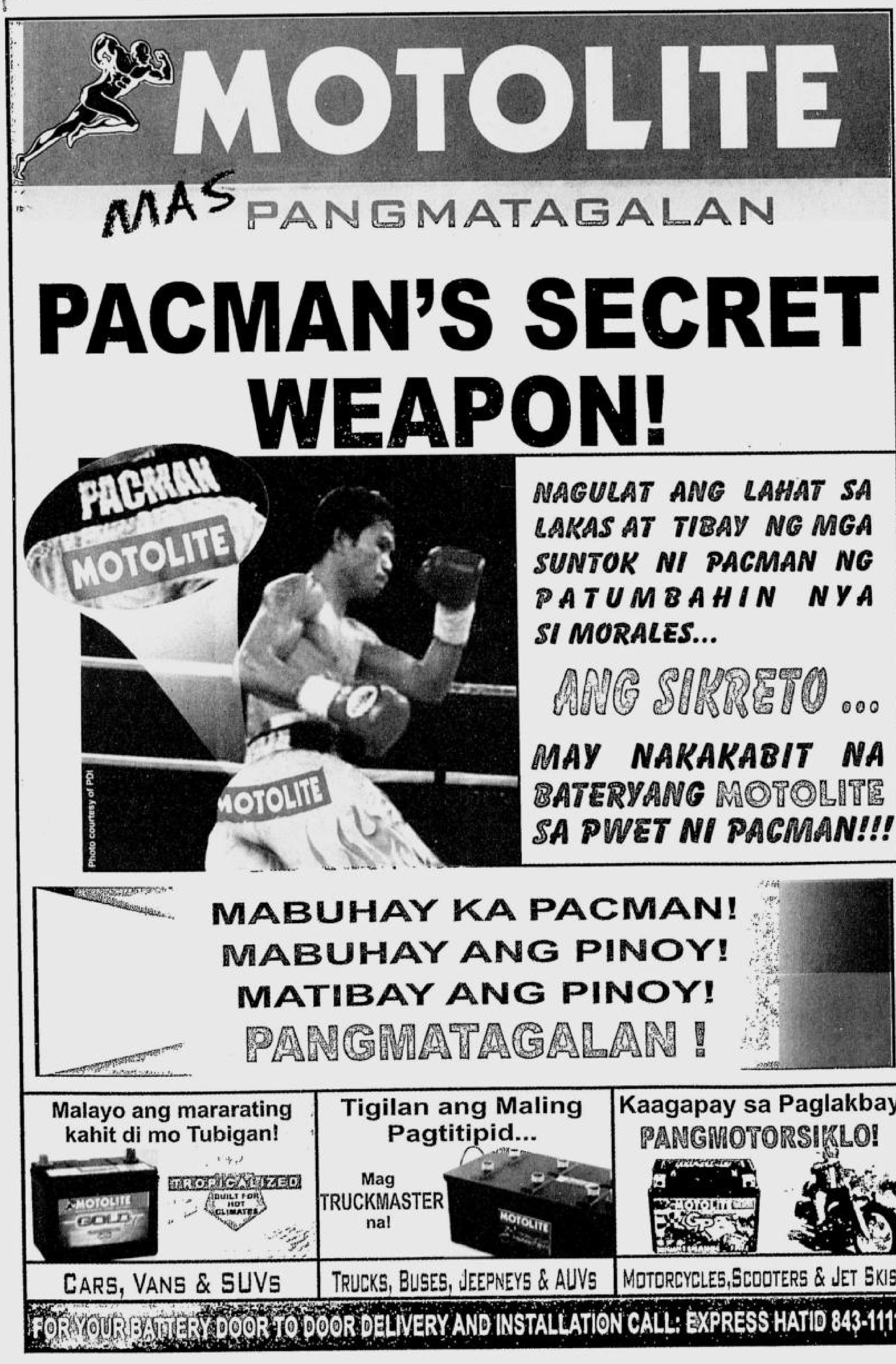
In Cleveland, Allen Iverson scored 34 points in his return to the Philadelphia lineup and did what he always does against the Cavs.

Iverson, who has had some of his biggest games against the Cavaliers, missed the previous four games with sore ankles. But all it took was another game in Cleveland to get the All-Star guard feeling better.

Chris Webber added 26 points, hitting a key jumper in the final minute.

In Oklahoma City, Desmond Mason scored 21 points, Chris Paul added 19 points and 13 assists, and New Orleans moved ahead of Los Angeles in the Western Conference standings. *AP*

NBA on TV: Utah vs Sacramento—8 a.m. live, 8 p.m. replay, Solar Sports. Houston vs New York—7:30 p.m. RPN-9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CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DUE to lack of space, Manolo Iñigo's column, Clean Living, will see print tomorrow. —Ed

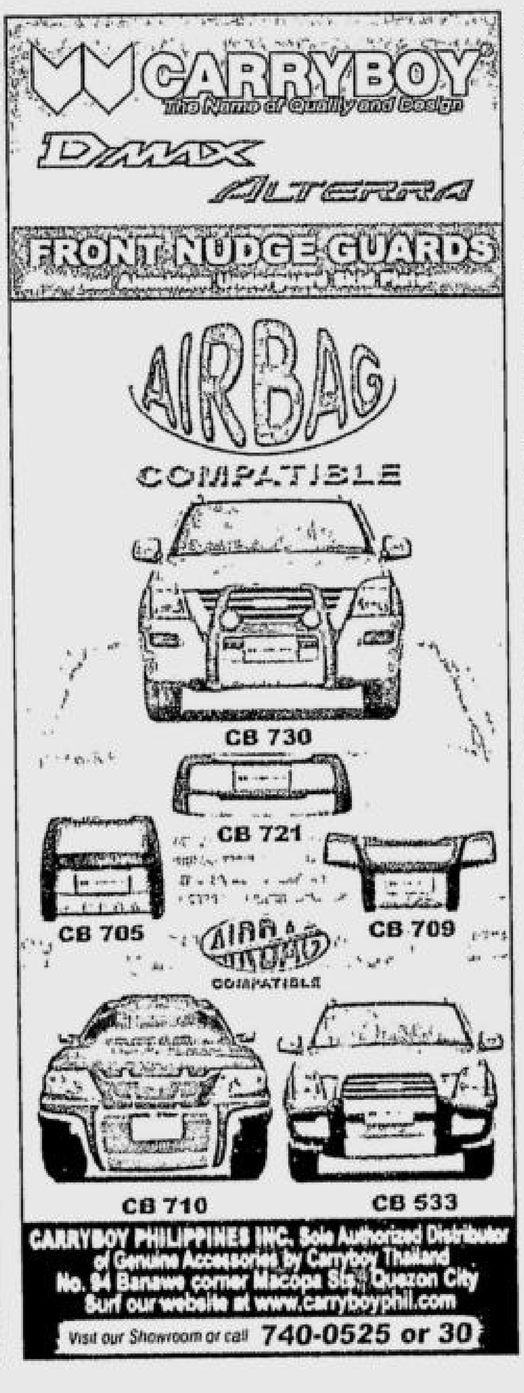
Dubai golf: Tiger has share of lead

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES—TIGER Woods blew his chance to win the Dubai Desert Classic five years ago on the 18th hole—sending a ball into the drink.

On Saturday, he capped a classic rally on the same hole's sprawling green to grab a share of the lead.

"It's a pretty funky hole," said Woods, who played it this time with a strategic ricochet-shot, netting him a birdie for a 5-under 67 that put his name atop the leaderboard with Danish journeyman Anders Hansen.

Retief Goosen, who was the co-leader after two rounds with Hansen, carded a 70 to fall one stroke off the pace at 15-under. *AP*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Morales

From page A24

1975.

* * *

Morales may have to resort to voodoo or other untried means in his forthcoming battle against the weighing scales.

Whether he would be able to normally trim down to 130 lb for the dream rubber-match with Pacquiao will again be a topic of serious debate.

But, come to think of it, didn't Pacquiao also suffer a stoppage after losing to the weighing scales when he was stripped of his WBC flyweight title on the eve of his defense against Medgoen 3-K Battery of Thailand in 1999?

At least, in Pacquiao's case, he humbly admitted defeat and next moved to the super bantamweight division.

In batting for a third encounter with Pacquiao, Morales will be gunning for the impossible.

But this doesn't necessarily mean Pacquiao would enjoy another punching picnic if and when Pacquiao-Morales Part 3 pushes through.

PCAP tilt sets 65 tiffs

A TOTAL of 65 fights are lined up today in the third leg of the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-cock derby series at the Makati Coliseum. The event is sponsored by B-Meg Derby Ace Premium Formula. Meanwhile, a 3-cock derby is also slated on Wednesday with a cash pot of P200,000.

Pacquiao event today

THE ELIMINATION round of the Pacquiao Big Event 8-cock derby unfolds today at the San Juan Coliseum. Manny Pacquiao is cosponsor of the derby, which will be presented by the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) and SJC management. Sponsor is Sagupan Complexor 3000.

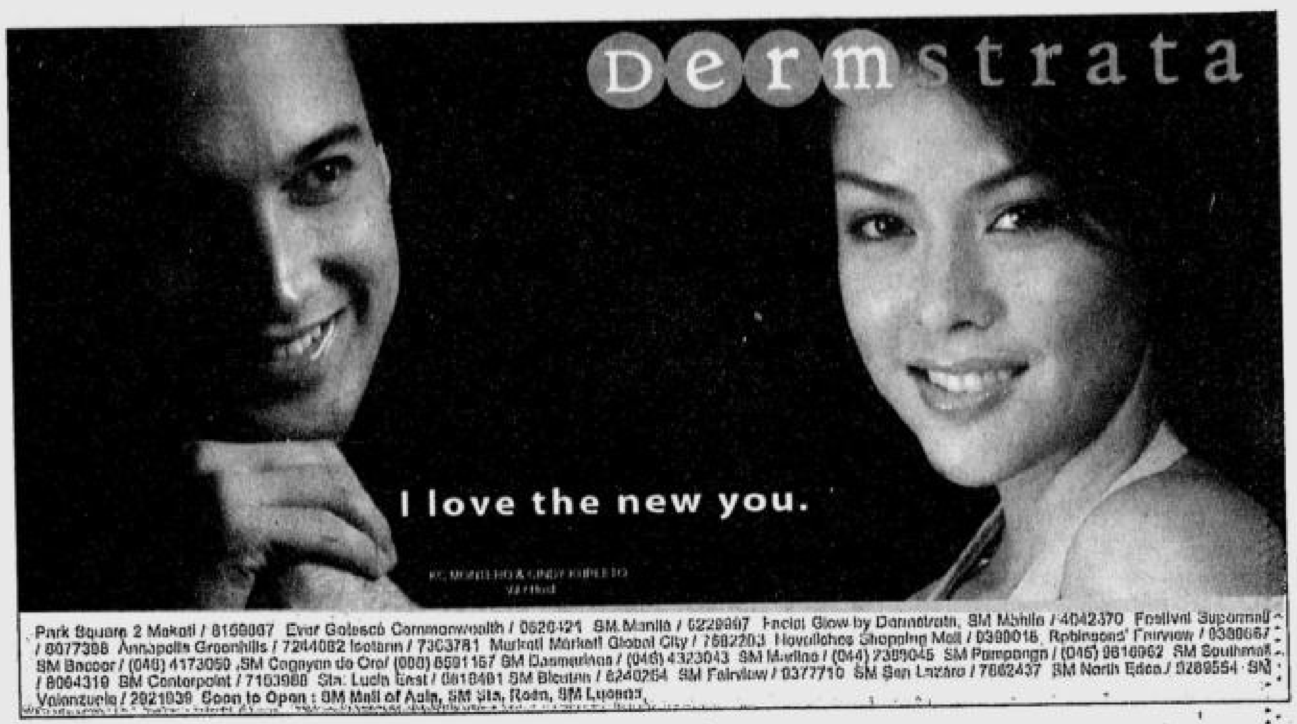
ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

Text us your feedback:
Inquirer ent name/age/city/m (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

RODNEY Argent (left, here with Colin Blunstone) fondly remembers Manila's "brightly decorated open jeeps."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'How We Were Before'

Zombies co-founder tells the story of one of the most endearing among the 'British Invasion' bands of the 1960s

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

APART FROM THE fetching vocals of Colin Blunstone, it was the distinctive keyboard work of original co-founding member Rodney Argent that made the Zombies one of the most endearing among the "British Invasion" bands of the 1960s.

The group returns to the Philippines after 39 years to perform on Feb. 10 at the Hard Rock Cafe in Makati, Feb. 13 at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City, and Feb. 14 at the Ynares Center in Antipolo.

In this exchange with INQUIRER Entertainment, Argent reveals how the group created a sound that has remained alive and powerful all these years.

What crucial musical elements produced the signature Zombies sound?

One crucial element was the incredibly wide range of music [that] we loved—elements of jazz and classical, along with the more usual influences of blues and rock 'n' roll. For example, I adored two albums by Miles Davis, "Kind of Blue" and "Miles Ahead," which were released [just] as the Zombies were starting. Many years later, the famous jazz guitarist Pat Metheny told me he loved the "modal" feel of "She's Not There." [That] came about, I think, because I had listened so much to Miles Davis' experiments at the time.

Unlike the Beatles whose leader John Lennon had been determined to make it to the "top of the topper-most," the Zombies considered breaking up even before it began recording. Why?

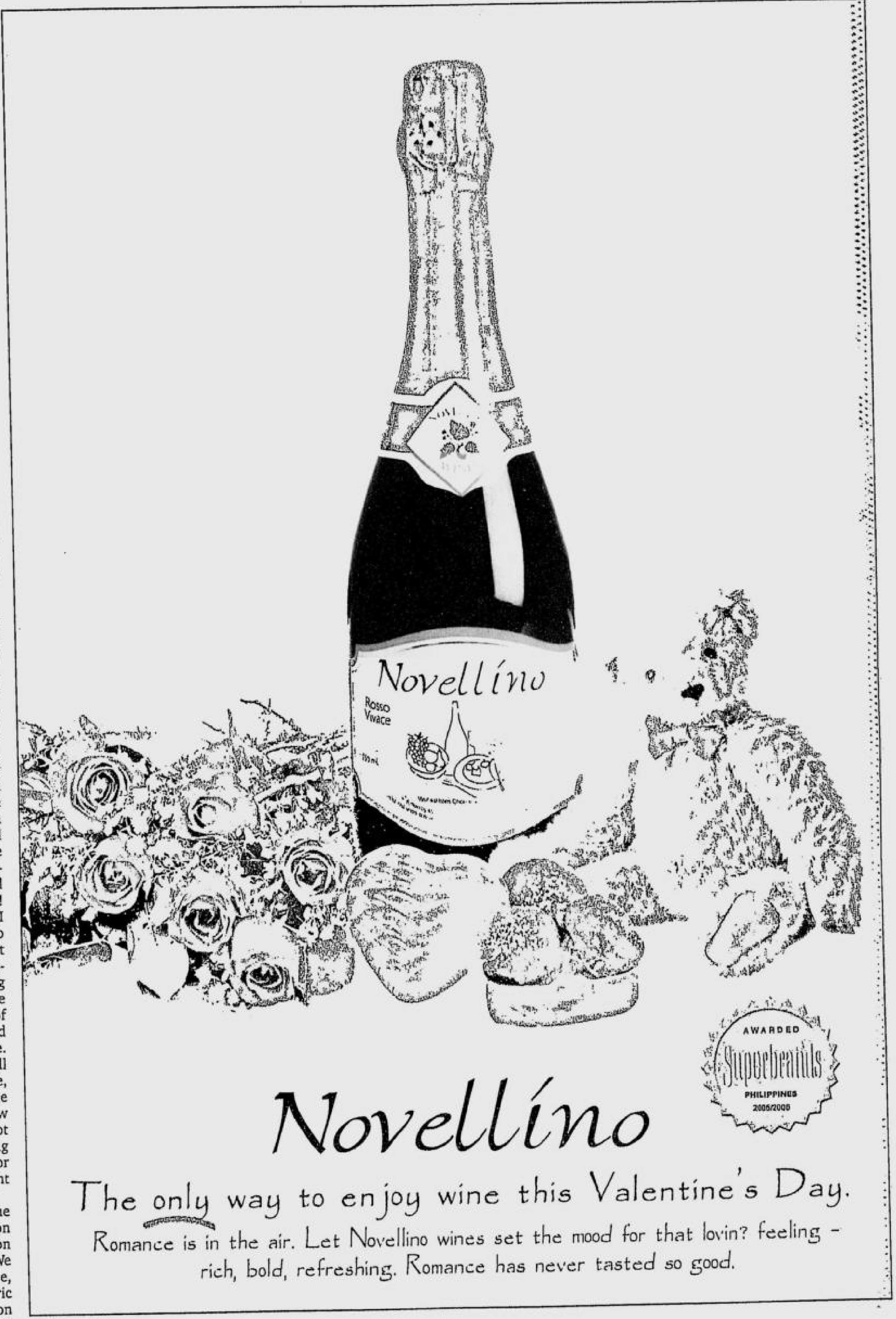
The band members had different ideas. I wanted more than anything else for us to become professionals with a recording contract, and I think [band mate] Chris White felt the same. I even made sure that I applied too late to be accepted at the university, before we entered the "Herts Beat 'Talent Contest" (1964), which offered as top prize a recording contract with Decca. From the start, I wanted a music career. The others were having a great time but were less sure that their paths ahead lay that way, and didn't make the decision until we actually won the contest.

"She's Not There" and "Time of the Season" are considered two of the most popular songs ever recorded. What inspired these gems?

"She's Not There" was only the second proper song I wrote, and I did it specifically for our first session at Decca. With all the arrogance and inexperience of youth, I thought, "I'm gonna write a song that we'll record and sound great and become a huge hit." When it happened, I was delighted, but not really surprised 'cause that was what I expected! Looking back now, I'm amazed. I know how many things have to be just right before you get a hit record. The producer and engineer have to be great, the song has to suit the band and fit the singer like a glove. The timing of the release has to be perfect and you have to get media exposure. We were incredibly lucky on all counts. In the US for instance, the Beatles had just burst the gates wide open for the new wave of British bands. "She's Not There" happened to come along at exactly the right moment for us to follow through and go right to the top of the charts.

"Time of the Season" came three years later. The inspiration came from the Smokey Robinson song "Tracks of My Tears." We used to play this song onstage, and for ages I thought the lyric was, "It's the time of the season to trace the tracks of my tears,"

'HOW WE/ A2-6



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The past should be remembered, not exhumed

VIEWFINDER
Nestor U. Torre

WHAT'S LOCAL TELEVISION COME TO? Network think tanks have largely stopped coming up with original concepts, and now content themselves with reviving, resurrecting, rehashing and even exhuming some old formats and stories that should have been left to rest in pieces.

Of course, these non-thinking tanks' alibi is that nostalgia is what viewers want to feel and see these days, so that's what our TV people are dishing out—in huge, icy-cold heaps.

That's why the old radio sudser, "Gulong ng Palad," has been dusted off for its current reincarnation on TV. For the umpteenth time, the hoary, old, rich-poor social and romantic dichotomy is being trotted out for yet another turn around the park.

And, set to open this month is "Komiks," an anthology show that retells the stories of old film hits like "Inday Bote" and "Blusang Itim."

If this rehashed material turns out to be popular with viewers, what would it say about us? That we haven't moved an inch forward in our viewing prefences in the past 25 years?

That's a sad and sorry realization that could help explain why we still can't get our act together as a nation, to solve the problems that have confronted us for, lo, these many years.

Our TV people should realize that they can't just feed off viewers' weaknesses, but should motivate them to focus and act on their strengths.

We're just giving our viewers what they want?

Oh, please. Maybe viewers think they want this because you don't give them anything else.

Television is so powerful and persuasive that it can create needs, so viewers shouldn't be blamed for what we see on that small screen.

Nostalgia has become the "in" thing today because some TV people are too lazy to come up with original material. It's much easier to simply reheat and rehash old movie or TV formats that have proven popular in the past.

However, TV people are so focused on trouncing the competition that they're bent on getting top ratings with any kind of show. If rehashed material does that for them, fine—and never mind its stagnating effect on both viewers and the TV industry.

This being the case, viewers have to step in and let TV people know that they want to see greater creativity on the small screen. Fewer boobs on the tube, please.

Giselle Sanchez

Singer-commedienne **Giselle Sanchez** heats up a heady musical brew at Siete Pecados at the Philippine Plaza at 9:20 p.m. on Feb. 8.

She shares the stage with her very special guest, **Dr. Margie Holmes**, call 551-5555.

Love on Nickelodeon

The Nickelodeon Channel gets bitter by the love bug this month, with its special four-day celebration leading up to Valentine's Day. From Feb. 11 to 14, Nick will be featuring love-themed episodes in its shows in its "Blooming Nick" special. You can join by sending in your artwork plus a dedication to your special someone and you may just see it on "Blooming Nick."

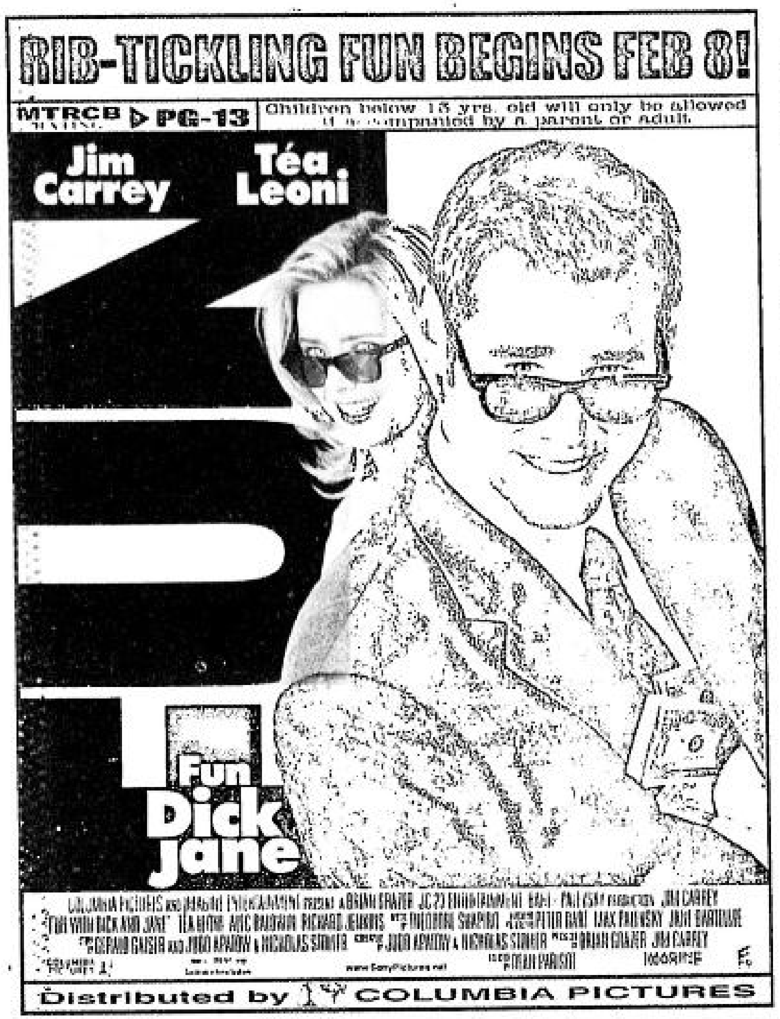
More Nick news: TEENICK features your favorite live-action series, like "Drake and Josh" and "Naturally Sadie." On weekends, catch **Jamie Lyn Spears** in "Zoey 101," and get school survival tips from "Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide."

And Spongebob Square Pants will "disappear" for six weeks, and everybody in Bikini Bottom will go on a frantic search. Viewers can also participate in the search. For more developments, log on to www.nickplat.com.

'Ani ng Sining'

The NCAA launches National Art Month today with its "Ani ng Sining" show at Rizal Park.

Performers include the Cordillera Ethnic Music Ensemble, Celso Espejo Rondalla, Pangkat Kawayan, Earthsavers Kalahi Dream Academy, Ramon Magsaysay Choir, St. Louis University Glee Club, Philippine Madrigal Singers, Makiling Ensemble and UP Singing Ambassadors.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BIG-TIME
DRUG DEALER

Boyet on parenting, Sandy, Nora and Vi

By Marinel R. Cruz

"MY CHILDREN KNOW THE ILL EFFECTS OF drugs. I always remind them that drugs almost ruined my life and that they should always have a strong conviction against drugs," said actor Christopher de Leon, a self-confessed former drug user who is said to have kicked the habit.

Christopher has four kids with actress Sandy Andolong—Rafael, 23, Miguel, 20, Gabriel, 17 and Michaela, 8. Actors Lotlot, Ian and Matet are his children with Nora Aunor.

"Kids nowadays think differently. I try to understand their quirks, know their likes and dislikes and simply be their *barkada*. I encourage them to do what they do best," Christopher told a group of entertainment writers in a gathering last week.

The actor said he feels strongly about being part of Gabriel Fernandez's "Nasaan Si Francis?", a dark comedy that tackles drug addiction.

In the movie, Christopher plays Rocky, a drug dealer looking for Francis (Epy Quizon) to collect on a drug debt. The film also features Paolo Contis, Ricky Davao, Rita Avila, Angel Locsin, Rio Locsin, Tanya Garcia, Julia Clarete, Michael de Mesa, Mark Gil and musicians Rico Blanco and Karl Roy.

Are you a strict father?

There have been instances when I had to be strict. But most of the time, I'm just like my children's friend.

Between you and Sandy, who is the stricter parent?

That would be me. *Si Sandy lang ang laging pumuputak sa kanila* (laughs). Luckily, I don't have a problem with my kids concerning drugs.

Why would people want to see this movie?

It's a fun film. It's actually based on the Visayan play, "Diin si Francis?" This is a film shot using 35mm camera and then converted to high definition (recording format) for easy editing, just like Episode 1 of "Star Wars." Two days ago, I had to pause when somebody asked, 'Is this an indie film?' It's actually a commercial film produced by an independent film outfit.

For me, one of the come-ons was the fact that I'd be working with Epy and Rico.

Why did you agree to play support to a first-time actor like Rico?

Just watch the film. The material is so good, I couldn't say no. I don't mind playing support.

In fact, I sometimes lower my talent fee to help a movie that I really believe in. All the actors in "Blue Moon" (directed by Joel Lamangan for Regal Films), for example, took discounted fees. We should all do our share. When the industry is back on its feet, we can demand bigger fees again.

Given the chance, what kind of material would you like to direct?

I'd like to discuss the conflicts of war. It doesn't have to be a really expensive project. I like the idea of doing a film similar to "Bagong Buwan" or "Platoon."

Do you still have a dream role?

I'd like to portray a soldier. I've never done that.

Did you ever wish to be a soldier in real life?

I *am* a soldier. I'm a weekend soldier of the Philippine Navy. On weekends, my group and I don uniforms and do social work. This complements my work for Oasis of Love, which is mostly on the spiritual level. The Navy and the Oasis of Love conduct combined missions.

What do you consider your most memorable film?

It has to be Lino Brocka's "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang." Second is "Blue Moon," because it's very heartwarming. "Ipagpatawad Mo" with Vilma (Santos) is also special to me. Vi is one of my favorite on-screen partners. We have chemistry. She's a very selfless actor.

Can you say the same about Nora?

Nora is a very effective actress. There was a time when she would just stare at you and you'd melt. I've not spoken with her since she left for the States, but our kids and I talk a lot.

("Nasaan Si Francis?", produced by Unitel Pictures and distributed by Unico Entertainment, will be shown in theaters starting Feb. 25.)

TAKE FIVE

> I always remind my children that drug abuse almost ruined my life

DID YOU KNOW... JAN. 31, was a red-letter day for Bamboo's Las Piñas fans, many of whom reserved seats for the band's gig at Padi's. Turnout was so huge, that reservations were cancelled summarily to accommodate walk-ins. Reservation fees were returned—but hey, that's not the point!

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2	WALK THE LINE	11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00	PG-13
3	DERAILED	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00	R-13
4	PROOF	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	PG-13

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ZATHURA GP 12:30,2:45,5:00, 7:15,9:30	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 GP 1:10,3:20,5:30,7:40,9:50	WALK THE LINE PG13 2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20
PROOF PG13 1:00,3:15,5:30,7:45,10:00	BLOODRAYNE R13 1:35,3:45,5:55, 8:05,10:15	DERAILED R13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30

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SAW 2 1:00 / 3.10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	BLOODRAYNE 1.00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	UNDERWORLD 2 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50	DERAILED 1:30 / 4:00 WALK THE LINE 6:15 / 9:00
ZATHURA '10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50	LITTLE MANHATTAN 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7.20 / 9:30	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30	ONLY P120 ADMISSION GLOBE PLATINUM P249/P299

ALIMALL CINEMAS

SAW 2 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	DERAILED 12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05	UNDERWORLD 2 1:40 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40
DON'T GIVE UP ON US 12.45 / 3:15 / 5:45 / 8:15	BLOODRAYNE 1:45 / 3:55 / 6:05 / 8:15	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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FEBRUARY 10 & 11, FRI & SAT. 8 pm

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① ZATHURA MTRCB. GP 3:30, 7:50 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 MTRCB.GP 1:20, 5:40, 10:00	③ WALK THE LINE MTRCB PG-13 1:30, 4.20, 7.10, 10:00
② DERAILED MTRCB R-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	④ SAW 2 MTRCB R-13 1:20, 3.30, 5:40, 7.50, 10:00

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CINEMA 3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:10 GP
CINEMA 4 WALK THE LINE 11:35, 2:20, 5:05, 7:50, 10:35 PG13
CINEMA 5 DERAILED 10:50, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 R13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

FEBRUARY 3 & 4	NINA & NYOY	9PM
FEBRUARY 10, 11 & 13	VINA M. RACHEL A. & GENEVA C.	8:30PM

TEATRINO

FEBRUARY 10,2006	BOBBY SOUL	9PM
FEBRUARY 11,2006	SIDE A	9PM
FEBRUARY 13 & 14	JAZZ YOU, JAZZ ME ISABELLA & RICHARD MERCK	9PM

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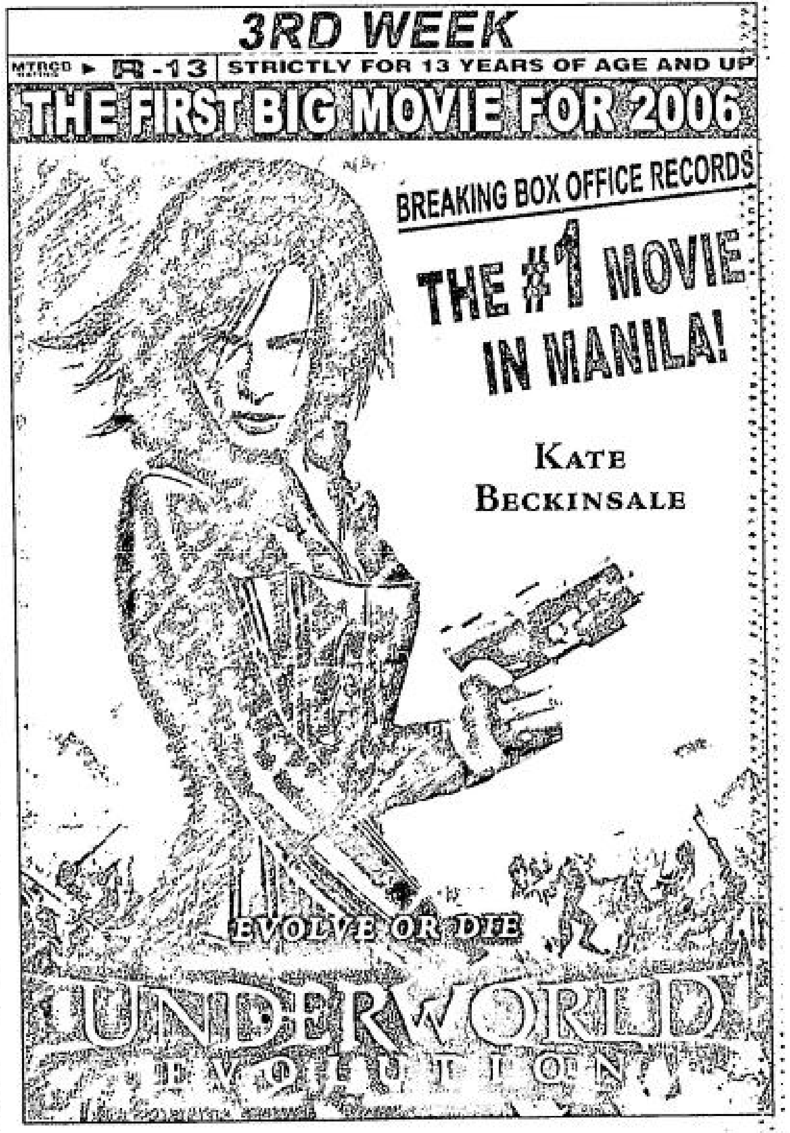
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THE #1 MOVIE IN MANILA!
KATE BECKINSALE
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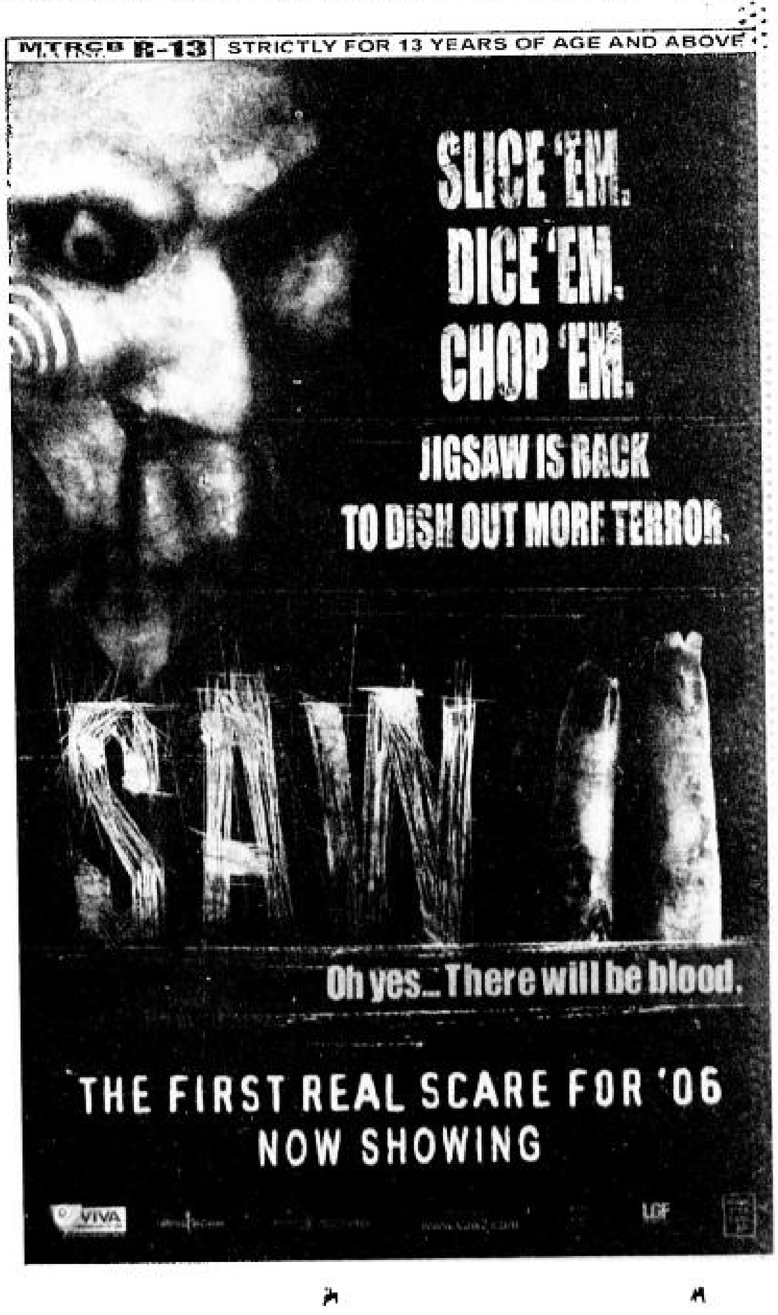
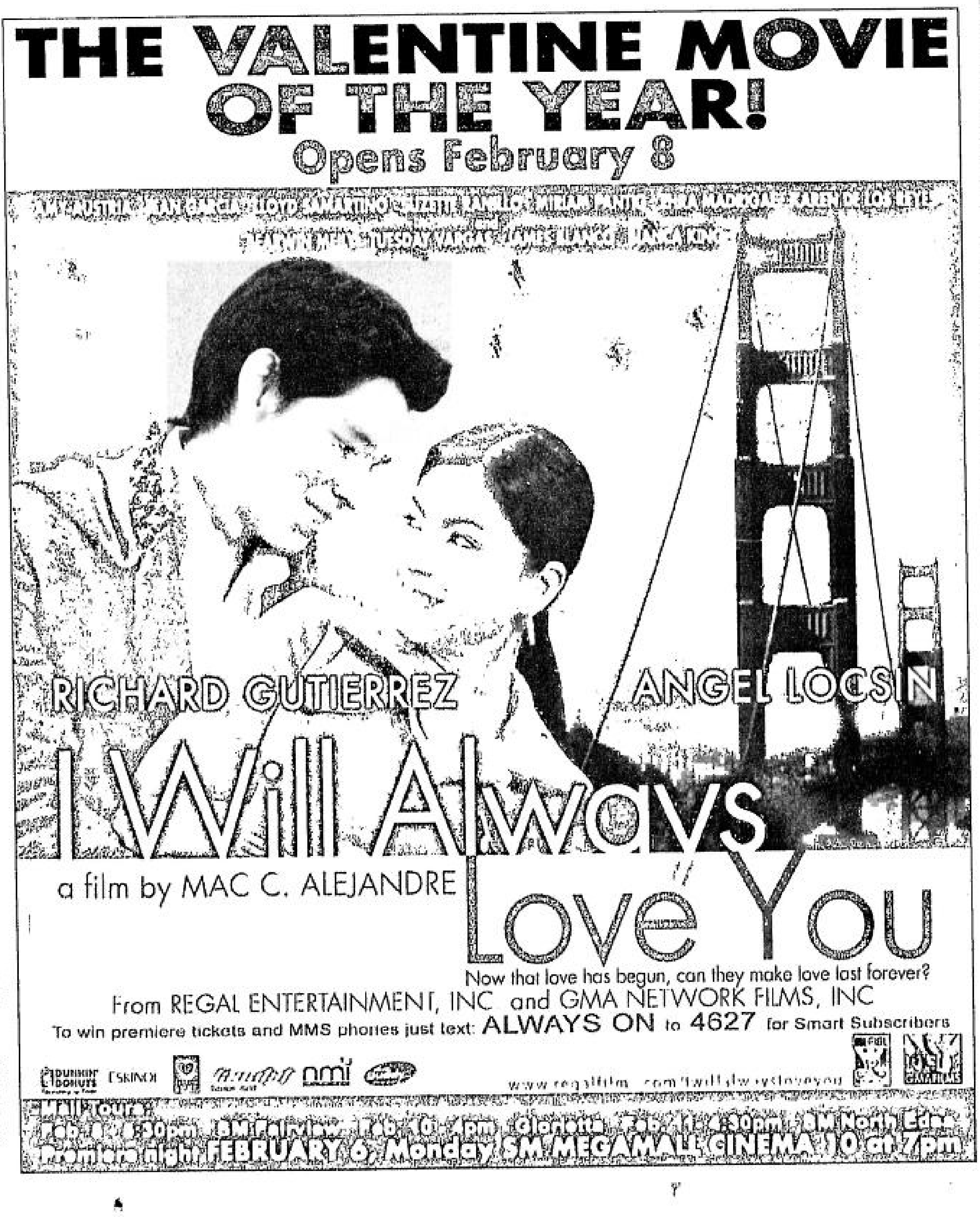

MTRCB R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
SLICE 'EM.
DICE 'EM.
CHOP 'EM.
JIGSAW IS BACK
TO DISH OUT MORE TERROR.
SAW II
Oh yes... There will be blood.
THE FIRST REAL SCARE FOR '06
NOW SHOWING
VIVA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Now that love has begun, can they make love last forever?
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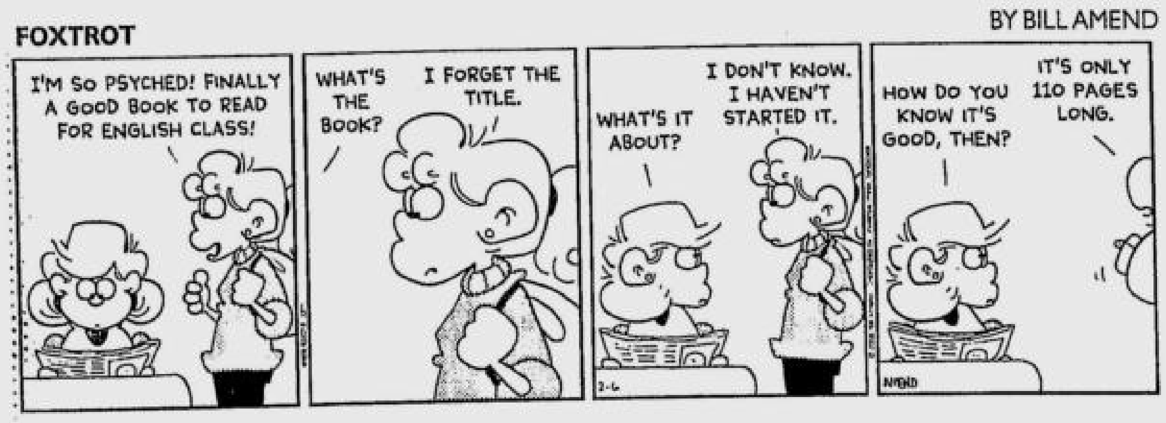
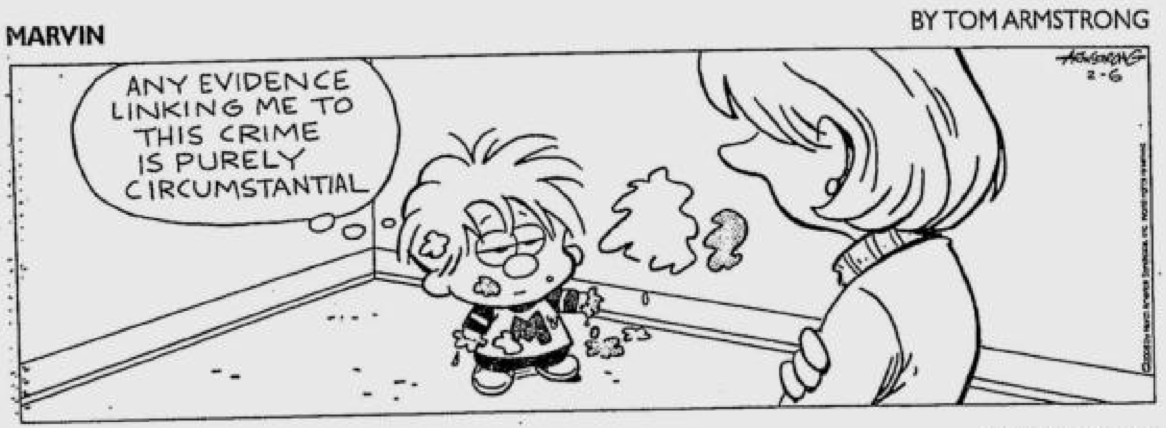
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I'M SO PSYCHED! FINALLY A GOOD BOOK TO READ FOR ENGLISH CLASS!
WHAT'S THE BOOK?
I FORGET THE TITLE.
WHAT'S IT ABOUT?
I DON'T KNOW. I HAVEN'T STARTED IT.
HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S GOOD, THEN?
IT'S ONLY 110 PAGES LONG.

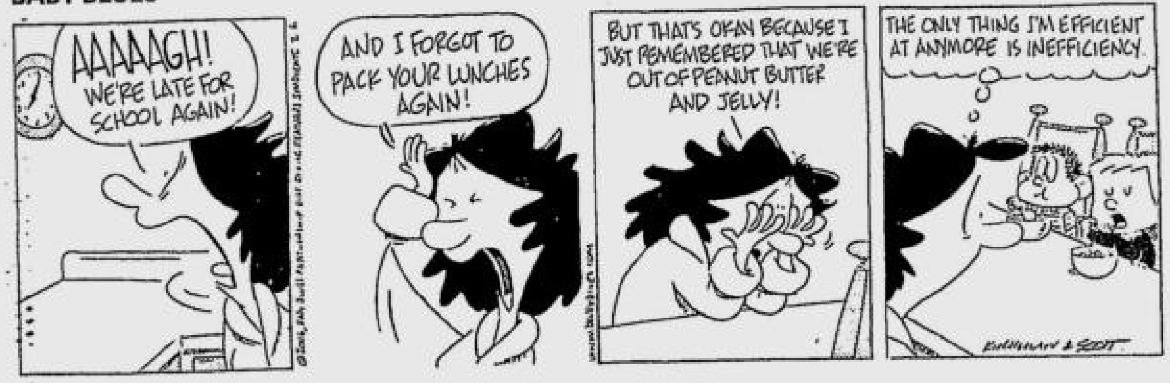
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


ANY EVIDENCE LINKING ME TO THIS CRIME IS PURELY CIRCUMSTANTIAL

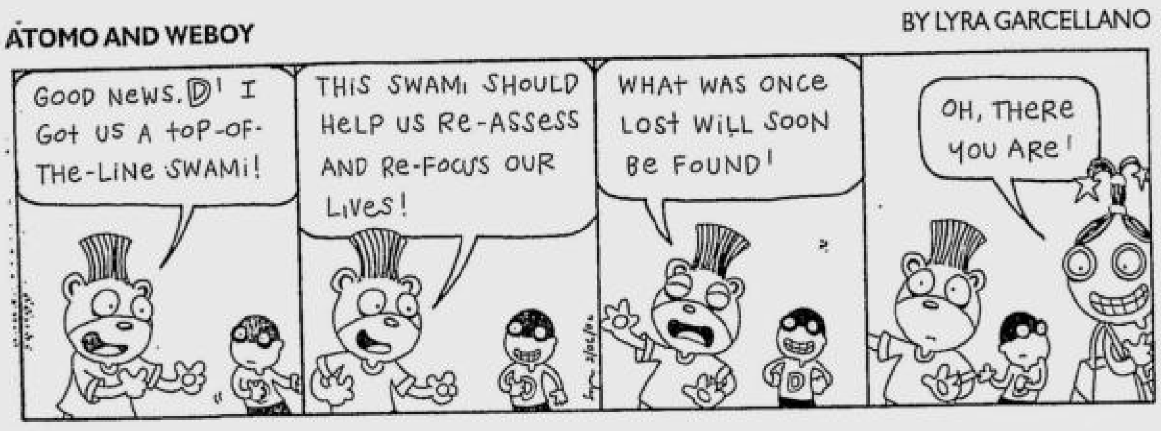
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


AAAAAGH! WE'RE LATE FOR SCHOOL AGAIN!
AND I FORGOT TO PACK YOUR LUNCHES AGAIN!
BUT THAT'S OKAY BECAUSE I JUST REMEMBERED THAT WE'RE OUT OF PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY!
THE ONLY THING I'M EFFICIENT AT ANYMORE IS INEFFICIENCY.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


GOOD NEWS, D! I GOT US A TOP-OF-THE-LINE SWAMI!
THIS SWAMI SHOULD HELP US RE-ASSESS AND RE-FOCUS OUR LIVES!
WHAT WAS ONCE LOST WILL SOON BE FOUND!
OH, THERE YOU ARE!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're extremely well-liked by those who know you. You have great people skills. (You also want to be popular.) Your charm, good looks and easygoing lack of pretension always win the day. You inspire confidence and trust from others. Expect increased time alone in the year ahead so that you can learn or study something important. **Birthdate of:** Ronald Reagan, US president/actor; Bob Marley, reggae singer/songwriter; George Herman "Babe" Ruth, baseball legend.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Conversations with others are illuminating and exciting. You might encounter entirely new beliefs that blow your mind. (You love pioneering fresh territory and new thoughts.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Lots of new information is coming at you today. And it's not trivial stuff! You're so excited about something you want to tell others how you feel.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is an exciting day for you because you adore learning new things. (Bright, shiny objects intrigue you.) People from other cultures and different backgrounds will teach you something today.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a great day to do any kind of research. You're determined to get to the bottom of something. You want the truth!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Conversations with others are revealing in a profound way. You could meet someone who actually changes the way you think. Possibly, you'll do this for someone else.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You want to get rid of whatever is extra and nonessential. This is a great day to recycle, give away, sell or junk what you no longer need. Just do it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Vacations, professional sports, romantic liaisons, artistic diversions and work with children are deeply profound and mesmerizing. You're totally caught up in what you're doing today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Family secrets might surface today. One thing is certain: Conversations with family members will reveal deep truths.

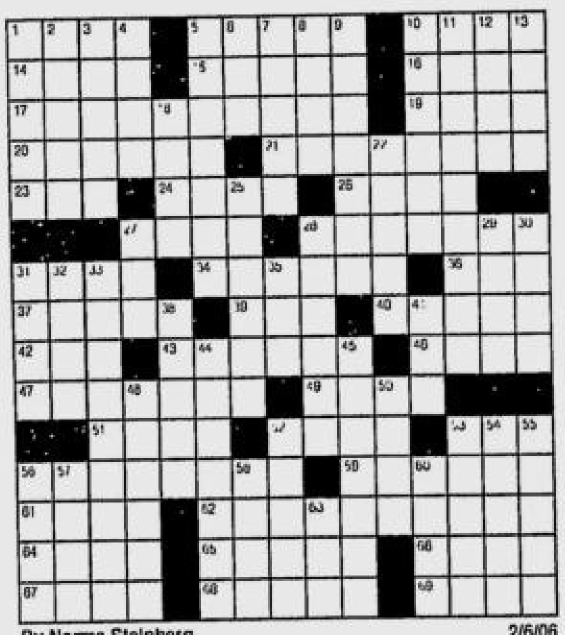
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might get hung up on a particular idea today. It could make you want to sell, influence or propagandize your beliefs. Shouting doesn't make people hear you any better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel almost compulsive about wanting to buy something today. You're obsessed! This is not how you like to handle your money. Think twice before you act.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a good time to begin any new kind of adventure, especially if it is hidden or covert in any way. You're very preoccupied or fascinated by something. You're like dog with a bone.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your ability to ferret out the truth of the situation is phenomenal today. It's as if you have X-ray vision. Go after anything you want to know more about.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA
2/6/06

ACROSS
1 Load luggage
5 British naval base, __ Flow
10 Coffee shop
14 Muscular stiffness
15 Grackle's scratcher
16 Leave out
17 Evening school event
19 Bushy 'do
20 Third word of the Constitution
21 F/X specialists
23 NFL gains
24 Tab's target
26 Lecherous look
27 Consider
28 Facts and figures
31 LLD holder
34 Hold in respect
36 Put on
37 Adores
39 Cup rim
40 Singer Bonnie
42 Airport info
43 Gushed with gusto
46 Easy __ it
47 Setting of a quote
49 Calif. neighbor
51 Fashionable
52 MacGraw and Baba
53 Was left idle
56 Plato or Aristotle
59 Brief stays
61 Designer Christian
62 Chophouse offering
64 Memo heading
65 Aunt in "Oklahoma!"
66 Rubberneck
67 Roman Polanski film
68 "Mr. __ Goes to Town"
69 Tuesday of Hollywood

DOWN
1 L'il Abner's dad
2 Behaved
3 Pandemonium
4 Jack or Jeremy
5 Three Rivers player
6 Feline
7 Elite invitees
8 French bridge
9 Sharp-cornered
10 Covered with a thin layer
11 Alarm clock feature
12 Discharge
13 Harrow's rival
18 Otherwise
22 More recent
25 Egg creation
27 Color changer
28 Abrogate
29 Schlep
30 Colonial insects
31 Guinness of "Star Wars"
32 Dorothy's pet
33 News honchos
35 Vitality
38 Beer mug
41 Wood shaper
44 Worked up about
45 Longest golf clubs
48 "__ a Girl in My Soup"
50 Egyptian fertility goddess
52 Tropical lizard
53 Military blockade
54 The least bit
55 Clicked one's tongue
56 Collier's access
57 Fork part
58 Competent
60 Put away
63 Homer's neighbor

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

O	H	M	■	B	A	R	E	■	T	I	P	P	E	D
P	O	I	S	O	N	E	R	■	O	N	L	I	N	E
A	N	A	C	O	N	D	A	■	N	U	A	N	C	E
R	E	T	A	K	E	S	■	P	E	R	I	S	H	■
T	R	A	M	S	■	■	B	I	R	E	T	T	A	S
■	■	■	S	T	A	L	A	G	■	■	E	R	I	C
O	A	F	■	O	L	E	S	■	M	A	R	I	N	O
G	N	U	■	R	A	T	A	T	A	T	■	P	E	T
L	O	S	S	E	S	■	L	O	U	T	■	E	D	S
E	M	I	T	■	■	S	T	O	L	E	S	■	■	■
S	A	L	A	R	I	E	S	■	■	S	M	A	C	K
■	L	E	N	O	R	E	■	C	I	T	A	B	L	E
A	I	E	L	L	O	■	L	O	V	E	R	B	O	Y
V	E	R	E	E	N	■	O	V	E	R	T	O	N	E
A	S	S	E	S	S	■	T	E	S	S	■	T	E	D

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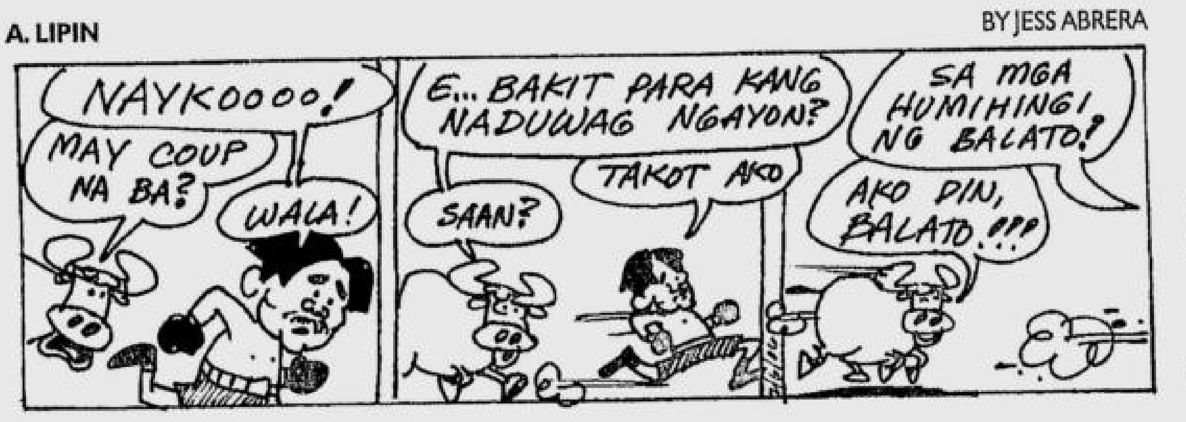
2/6/06

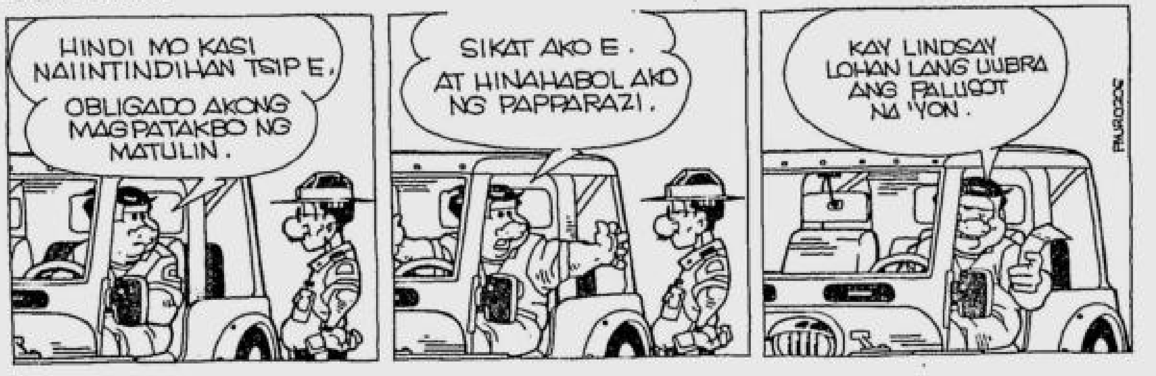
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAYKOOOO!
MAY COUP NA BA?
WALA!
E... BAKIT PARA KANG NADUWAG NGAYON?
SAAN?
TAKOT AKO
SA MGA HUMIHINGI NG BALATO!
AKO DIN, BALATO!!!

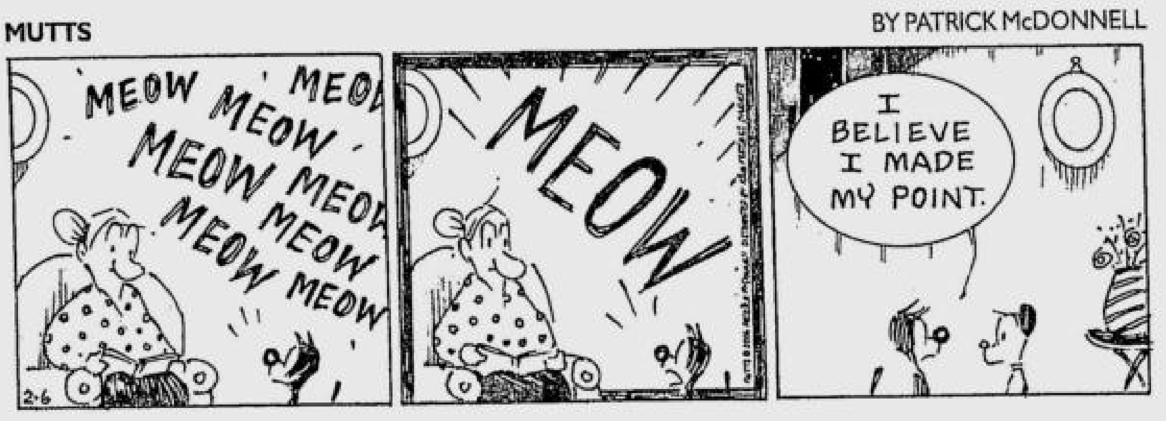
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HINDI MO KASI NAIINTINDIHAN TSIP E.
OBLIGADO AKONG MAGPATAKBO NG MATULIN.
SIKAT AKO E.
AT HINAHABOL AKO NG PAPPARAZI.
KAY LINDSAY LOHAN LANG UUBRA ANG PALUSOT NA 'YON.

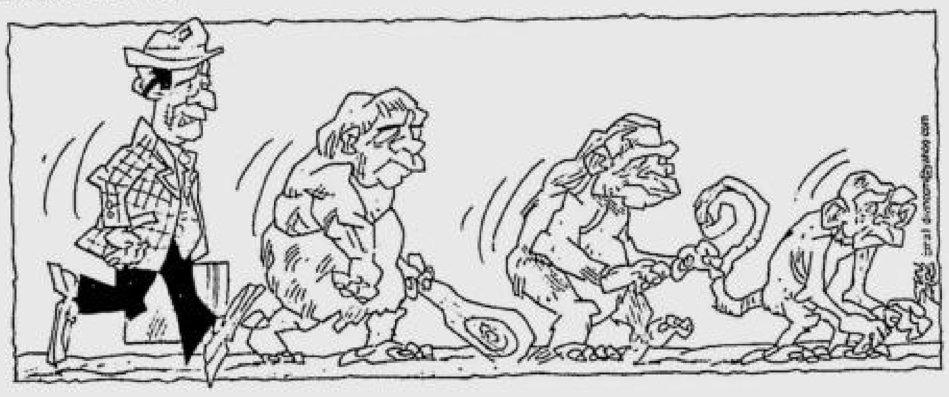
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW
MEOW
I BELIEVE I MADE MY POINT.

DIVINE COMEDY

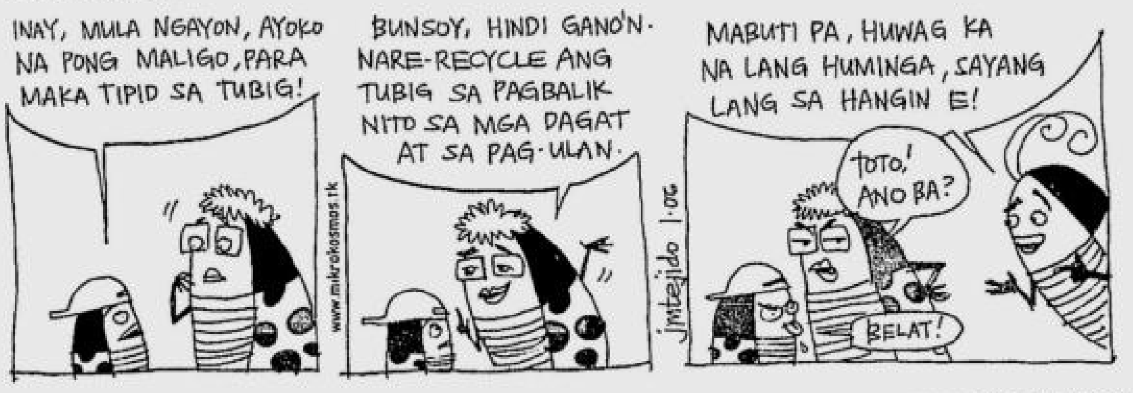
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



THE EVOLUTION OF MAN AFTER TELEVISION WAS INVENTED

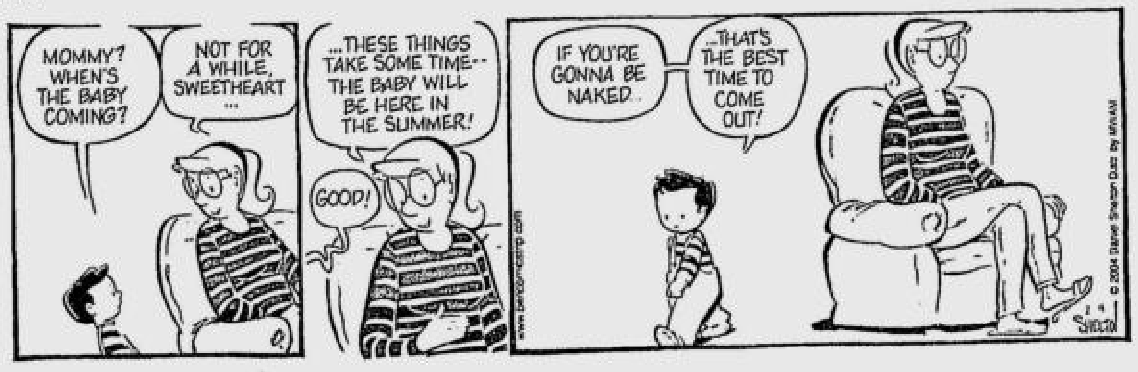
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, MULA NGAYON, AYOKO NA PONG MALIGO, PARA MAKA TIPID SA TUBIG!
BUNSOY, HINDI GANO'N. NARE-RECYCLE ANG TUBIG SA PAGBALIK NITO SA MGA DAGAT AT SA PAG-ULAN.
MABUTI PA, HUWAG KA NA LANG HUMINGA, SAYANG LANG SA HANGIN E!
TOTO, ANO BA?
BELAT!
www.mikrokosmos.tk

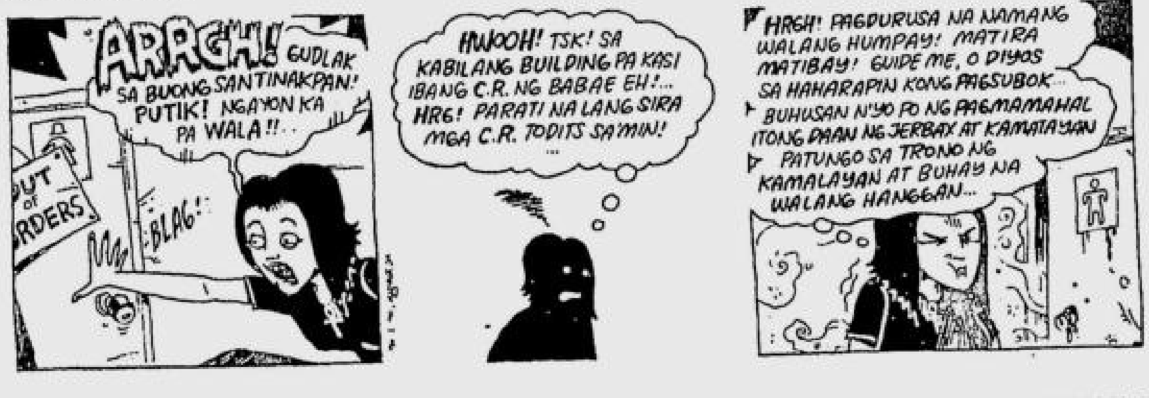
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MOMMY? WHEN'S THE BABY COMING?
NOT FOR A WHILE, SWEETHEART ...
...THESE THINGS TAKE SOME TIME-- THE BABY WILL BE HERE IN THE SUMMER!
GOOD!
IF YOU'RE GONNA BE NAKED...
...THAT'S THE BEST TIME TO COME OUT!

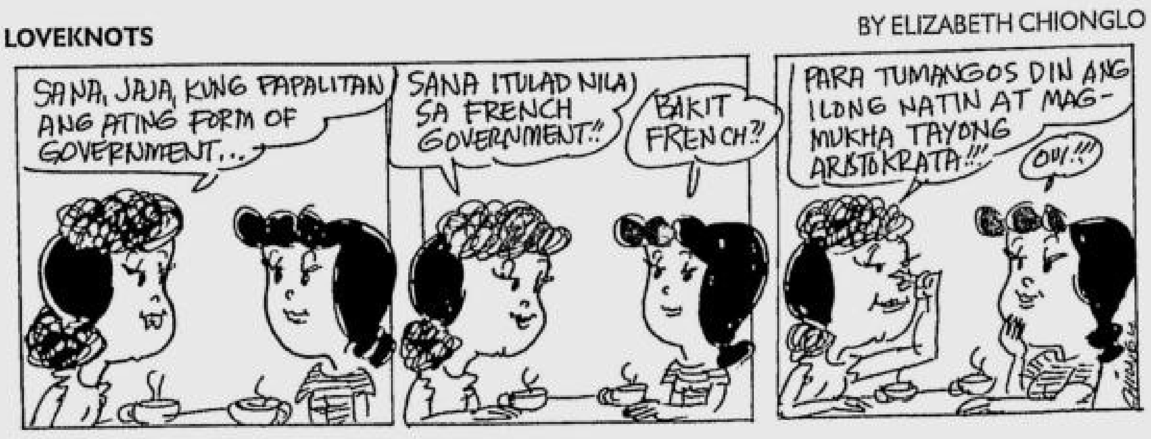
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ARRGH! GUDLAK SA BUONG SANTINAKPAN! PUTIK! NGAYON KA PA WALA!!...
OUT OF ORDERS
BLAG!
HWOOH! TSK! SA KABILANG BUILDING PA KASI IBANG C.R. NG BABAE EH!... HRG! PARATI NA LANG SIRA MGA C.R. TODITS SA'MIN!
HRGH! PAGDURUSA NA NAMANG WALANG HUMPAY! MATIRA MATIBAY! GUIDE ME, O DIYOS SA HAHARAPIN KONG PAGSUBOK... BUHUSAN N'YO PO NG PAGMAMAHAL ITONG DAAN NG JERBAX AT KAMATAYAN PATUNGO SA TRONO NG KAMALAYAN AT BUHAY NA WALANG HANGGAN...

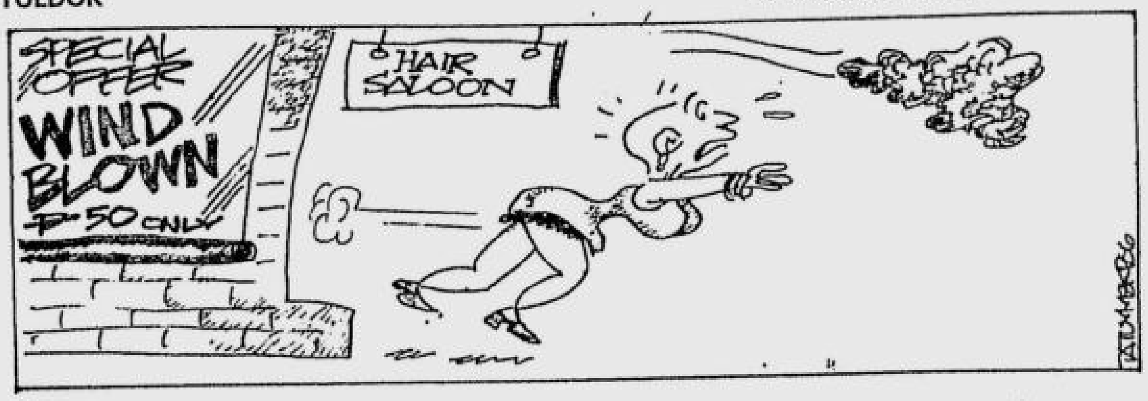
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SANA, JAJA, KUNG PAPALITAN ANG ATING FORM OF GOVERNMENT...
SANA ITULAD NILA SA FRENCH GOVERNMENT!!
BAKIT FRENCH?!
PARA TUMANGOS DIN ANG ILONG NATIN AT MAG-MUKHA TAYONG ARISTOKRATA!!!
OW!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SPECIAL OFFER
WIND BLOWN
₱50 ONLY
HAIR SALOON

ROUNDUP

Breakup

AUSTIN, TEXAS—Lance Armstrong and Sheryl Crow have split, the couple announced in a joint statement on Friday.

The seven-time Tour de France champion and the rock star announced their engagement in September. It would have been her first marriage and his second. He has three children from a previous marriage.

"We ask that everyone respect our privacy during this very difficult time," the statement said. *AP*

5th Potter

LONDON—A veteran Academy Award nominee and a 14-year-old unknown will join the cast of J.K. Rowling's epic Harry Potter series as filming begins next week on the latest movie, producers said Thursday.

"Harry Potter and The Order of the Phoenix"—with young actor Daniel Radcliffe again in the title role—begins shooting Monday in Hertfordshire in southern England.

Potter with his attraction to new character Luna Lovegood, a role taken by 14-year-old newcomer Evanna Lynch.

Lynch beat out 15,000 young rivals in an open casting for the part. *AP*

Tribute

LOS ANGELES—All eyes will be on James Taylor, 57, when he is honored as MusiCares Person of the Year by the Recording Academy on Monday night to kick off Grammy week.

"It's going to be like some kind of torture," Taylor said, jokingly.

Taylor was selected for his accomplishments as a musician and for his philanthropic efforts. He has served as a board member of the Natural Resources Defense Council and supported juvenile diabetes research. *AP*

Canceled

NEW YORK—"Lestat," the Elton John-Bernie Taupin musical inspired by Anne Rice's "The Vampire Chronicles" has canceled its first two weeks of preview performances in New York and delayed its Broadway opening until April 25.

The musical received scorching reviews during its San Francisco tryout, which ended Jan. 29. The San Francisco Chronicle called the show "didactic, disjointed, oddly miscast, confusingly designed and floundering in an almost unrelentingly saccharine score by Elton John." The San Jose Mercury News sniffed, "the vampire musical showed few signs of life." *AP*

Divorce

LOS ANGELES—American television actress Heather Locklear has filed for a divorce from her rocker husband Richie Sambora, lead guitarist for Bon Jovi.

Locklear, 44, cited "irreconcilable differences" in her attempt to end her 11-year marriage to Sambora, 46. *AFP*

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CENTER Stage
LIVE-LARGE
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THE PODIUM 633-8976
WALK THE LINE
12:05FS / 12:35 MF / 03:20 / 06:05
08:20 LFS / 09:00 LMF / 11:15 END
DERAILED
12:00 FS / 01:15 MF / 04:10 / 06:30
08:20 LFS / 09:00 LMF / 10:50 END
MEGAMALL
DERAILED
11:15 FS / 11:45 MF / 02:00
03 45 LFS / 04 15 LMF / 06 00 END
CEBU (032) 231-3876
RESERVED
UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION
11:20 FS / 11:30 MF / 01:30 / 03:30 / 05:30 / 07:30
09:15 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:15 END
DERAILED
11:20 FS / 11:30 MF / 01:30 / 03:30 / 05:30 / 07:30
09 20 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:20 END
movietime

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 WALK THE LINE
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 BIG TIME
5 ZATHURA
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
7 SAW 2
8 PROOF
9 UNDERWORLD 2
10 THE MAID
11 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
12 NARNIA

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 ZATHURA
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 DERAILED
5 SAW 2
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
7 WALK THE LINE
8 NARNIA
9 PROOF
10 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 DERAILED
3 SAW 2
4 UNDERWORLD 2

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 DERAILED
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 SAW 2
4 THE MAID

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 NARNIA
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
3 BIG TIME
4 SAW 2
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 BLOODRAYNE
7 UNDERWORLD 2
8 ZATHURA
9 BLUE MOON
10 DERAILED
11 KING KONG
12 THE MAID

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 SAW 2
4 BLOODRAYNE
5 ZATHURA
6 PROOF
7 WALK THE LINE
8 DERAILED
9 BIG TIME
10 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 DERAILED
2 SAW 2
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 UNDERWORLD 2

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 ZATHURA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 SAW 2
5 DERAILED
6 PROOF
7 WALK THE LINE
8 BLOODRAYNE

SM CITY MANILA
1 NARNIA
2 DERAILED
3 SAW 2
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 ZATHURA
6 BLOODRAYNE
7 PROOF
8 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 THE MAID
11 BIG TIME
12 WALK THE LINE

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 DERAILED
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 SAW 2
5 PROOF
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 ZATHURA
2 DERAILED
3 NARNIA
4 THE MAID
5 RUMOR HAS IT
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 RUMOR HAS IT

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 ZATHURA
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
4 DERAILED

SM CITY BACOOR
1 NARNIA
2 ZATHURA
3 SAW 2
4 BLOODRAYNE
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
7 DERAILED
8 HALF LIGHT

SM CITY MARILAO
1 DERAILED
2 THE MAID
3 ZATHURA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 RUMOR HAS IT
4 THE MAID

SM CITY LUCENA
1 ZATHURA
2 ST. ANGE
3 LITTLE MANHATTAN
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 ZATHURA
3 DERAILED
4 RUMOR HAS IT

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 RESERVED
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DERAILED
4 LITTLE MANHATTAN
5 NARNIA
6 THE MAID
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 ZATHURA

SM CITY ILOILO
1 ST. ANGE
2 RESERVED
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ZATHURA
5 RUMOR HAS IT
6 DERAILED
7 RESERVED
8 THE MAN

SM CITY DAVAO
1 DERAILED
2 SAINT ANGE
3 ZATHURA
4 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 DERAILED
2 FAMILY STONE
3 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
4 ZATHURA

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GALLERIA 632-9116
1 ZATHURA • THX 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9.50
2 BLOODRAYNE 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
3 DERAILED 12:00 2:30 5.00 7:30 10:00
4 SAW 2 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
5 WALK THE LINE 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
6 UNDERWORLD 2 12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50
7 RUMOR HAS IT 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
8 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
9 PROOF 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
10 DON'T GIVE UP ON US 12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
1 BLOODRAYNE 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
2 ZATHURA 12:00 2:00 4:00
CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 6:15 8:10 10:00
3 UNDERWORLD 2 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
4 WALK THE LINE 10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
5 DERAILED 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
6 PROOF 10:30 12:30 2:20 4:10 6:00 8:00 9:50
7 SAW 2 10:20 12:20 2.20 4:20 6:20 8:20 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 1.00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9.00
2 DERAILED 11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05
3 ZATHURA 11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05
4 UNDERWORLD 2 12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00
5 BLOODRAYNE 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US 12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00
7 SAW 2 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
8 PROOF 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 ZATHURA
3 HALF LIGHT
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 SAW 2
6 DERAILED

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2576
1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 JUTOB
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378
1 DERAILED
2 BLOODRAYNE
3 UNDERWORLD 2
4 ZATHURA

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Sudhir and Simran are a happy couple settled in Bangkok. Engineer and chasing his dreams Sudhir ignores his wife. In an alien land and novel atmosphere Simran gets longs to pursue new horizons. At this juncture she meets an old buddy Sunny. Their loneliness brings them together and ignites a passion blinded by desire. Subsequently they cross all boundaries. Soon they get obsessed and addicted to each other and Simran's adulterous affair begins to show off. Infuriated by the deteriorating state of his marriage, Sudhir confronts Sunny. And this very meeting leads to devastating results for them all.
starting
FEBRUARY 22
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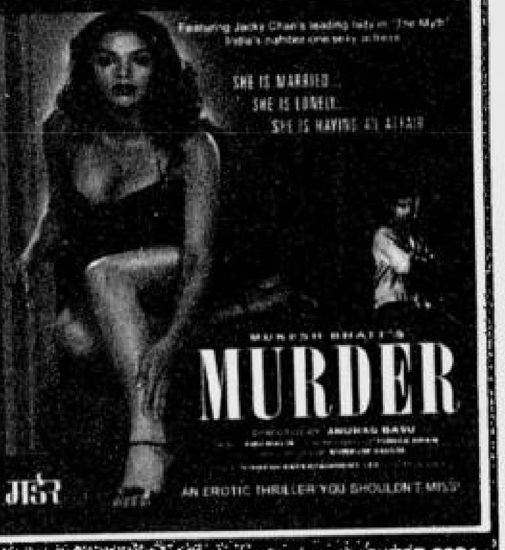

SHE IS MARRIED...
SHE IS LONELY...
SHE IS HAVING AN AFFAIR
MUKESH BHATT'S
MURDER
AN EROTIC THRILLER YOU SHOULDN'T MISS

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907
1 DERAILED
2 THE MAID
3 LITTLE MANHATTAN
4 MOURNING GIRLS
5 ZATHURA

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870
1 ZATHURA
2 MOURNING GIRLS
3 SAINT ANGE
4 RUMOR HAS IT
5 DERAILED

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 LITTLE MANHATTAN
4 RUMOR HAS IT
5 THE MAID

ANGELES (045) 892-2348
1 JARHEAD
2 KUTOB
3 RUMOR HAS IT
4 DERAILED

IMUS (046) 875-3836 (046) 471-8188
1 HALF LIGHT
2 ZATHURA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 DERAILED
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
6 SAW 2

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270
1 HALF LIGHT
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 ZATHURA
4 RUMOR HAS IT
5 THE MAID
6 DERAILED

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 JARHEAD
4 LITTLE MANHATTAN
5 MOURNING GIRLS
6 WHO'S YOUR DADDY?

ILOILO (033) 336-8070
1 DERAILED
2 ZATHURA
3 JARHEAD
4 THE MAN
5 RUMOR HAS IT
6 SAINT ANGE

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‘How We Were Before’

From page A2-1

instead of “If you look closer, it’s easy to trace the tracks of my tears.” When I found out, I was really disappointed, and vowed to use the misheard lyric in a song of my own. “Time of the Season” was written very quickly and became the last song ever to be recorded by the first incarnation of the Zombies. One small point of interest, the lines “What’s your name, who’s your daddy, is he rich like me” represent a small nod in the direction of one of my favorite songs of all time, "Summertime" (Your daddy’s rich and your mama’s good looking…”).

When the band broke up, you and Colin Blunstone went on to pursue separate musical careers. How do you assess your own achievement in the context of your work with the Zombies?

> ‘She’s Not There’ and ‘Time of the Season’ are two of the biggest songs ever recorded

FOR BLUNTSTONE and Argent, touring again, though “totally unplanned… feels better than ever.”

I’m proud of a lot of the things that have occurred at every stage of my musical career—and not necessarily the most successful. For instance, of course I’m proud of the “Argent” hits, but my favorite recorded moments with that band occur on the first two albums, “Argent” and “Ring of Hands,” which are relatively unknown. Some of the stuff sounds great. After "Argent" split, I felt the need to broaden my musical base. From 1975-2000, I was lucky enough to be able to pursue many different paths—playing on other artists’ records like the Who, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Gary Moore. By 2000 though, I was ready to play live again and did a charity show to raise money for a theater close to where I live. Colin was in the audience and, on a whim, I asked him up on stage to sing a couple of songs. It felt as if we’d last played together two weeks before, instead of over 30 years, and before we knew it, we’d put together a fantastic band and were touring and recording again! This was totally unplanned but it feels like we are completing a circle. Playing together feels better than ever.

Describe your most memorable moments when the Zombies first played in the Philippines in 1967.

The first memorable moment was arriving. We had no idea we were popular in the country and thought the hundreds of people at the airport were there for some visiting politician! When we turned on the TV, we saw other bands singing our songs! And then the audiences ... playing to many thousands each night for 10 nights was a great experience. Outside [of these], my overriding impression on the streets of Manila was the hundreds of brightly decorated open jeeps… also the many kind and friendly people we met everywhere.

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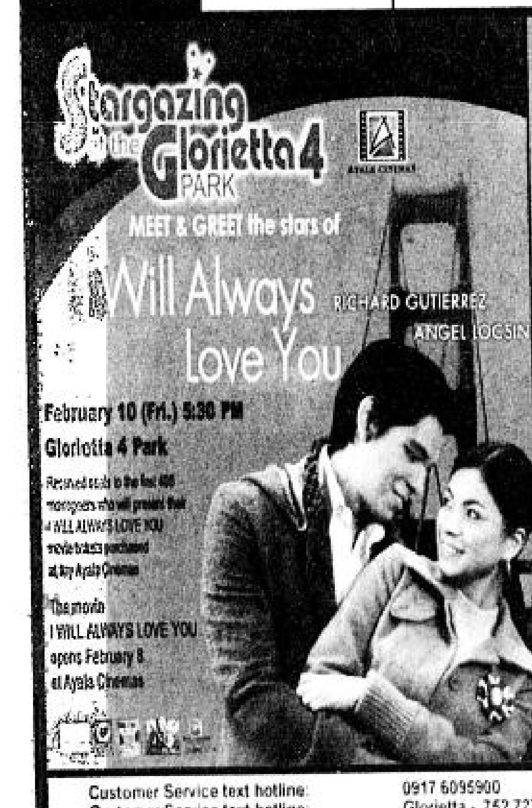
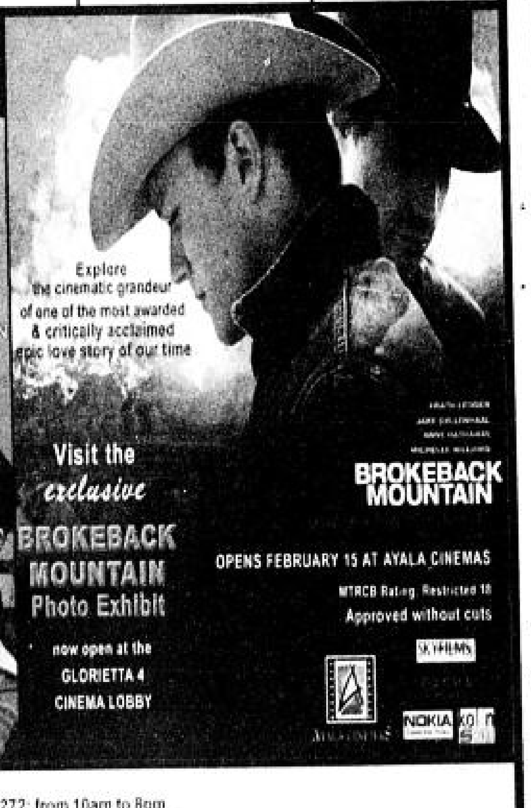
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 DERAILED	2 SAW 2	3 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	4 BLOODRAYNE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 PROOF	2 SAW 2	3 THX DERAILED GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 ZATHURA	5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2	6 WALK THE LINE	7 BLOODRAYNE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 DERAILED	2 WALK THE LINE		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX DERAILED GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX WALK THE LINE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SAW 2 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 PROOF GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX WALK THE LINE	2 PROOF		
	3 DERAILED	4 BLOODRAYNE	5 SAW 2	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DERAILED	2 LITTLE MANHATTAN	3 THE MAID	4 HALF LIGHT


Stargazing at the Glorietta 4 PARK
AYALA CINEMAS
MEET & GREET the stars of
I Will Always Love You
RICHARD GUTIERREZ
ANGEL LOCSIN
February 10 (Fri.) 5:30 PM
Glorietta 4 Park
Reserved seats to the first 400 moviegoers who will present their I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU movie tickets purchased at any Ayala Cinemas
The movie I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU opens February 8 at Ayala Cinemas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① WALK THE LINE
② UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION
③ BLOODRAYNE
④ DERAILED
⑤ SAW 2

EVENTS! EVENTS!

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Buy 2 cinema tickets from Feb. 10 - 19, 2006 and get a chance to win an instant Valentine prize!

The 2 tickets must be bought for the same movie and on the same day.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-075, Series of 2006

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3: Blood Rayne
4: Underworld 2

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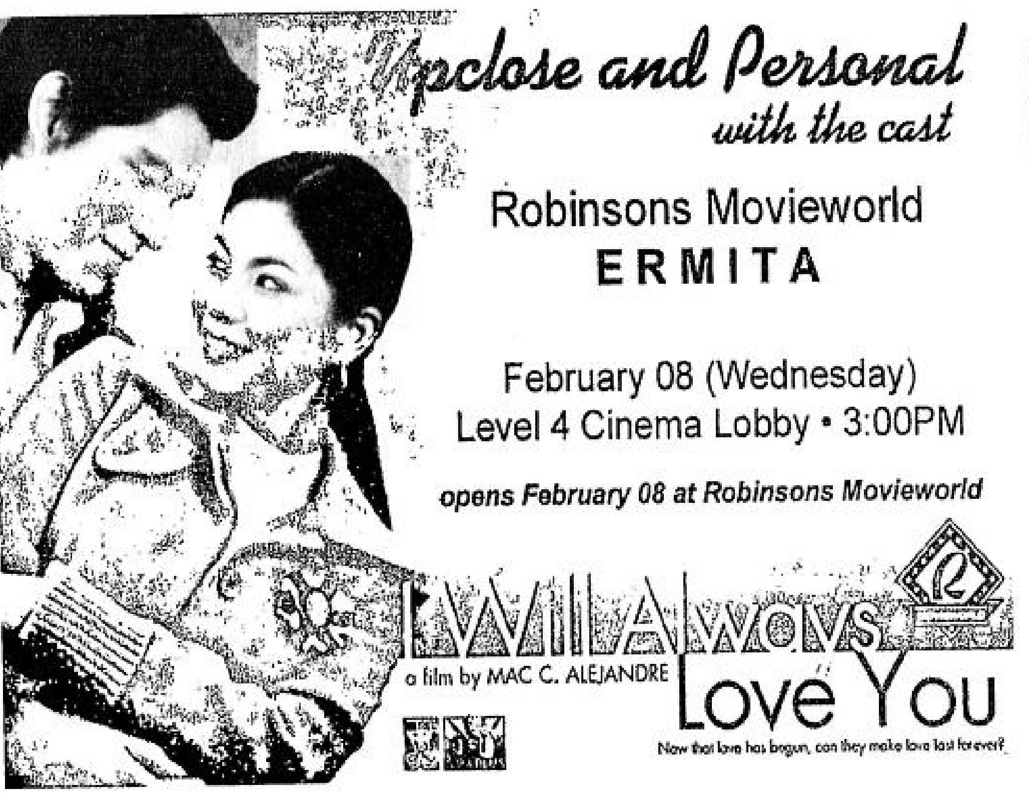
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NTT to raise stake in PLDT to 20%

Group to acquire shares from the market

By Clarissa S. Batino

NIPPON TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH CORP. (NTT), the world's biggest telecom conglomerate, is raising its stake in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to 20 percent.

NTT, through subsidiaries NTT Communications Inc. and NTT DoCoMo, owns 14 percent of the local telecom giant.

PLDT officials said DoCoMo, which recently acquired 7 percent of PLDT from affiliate NTT Communications, was set to buy an additional 6-percent stake in PLDT in the coming months.

DoCoMo will have to accumulate the shares from the market and must take advantage of PLDT preferred shares that were being converted into common stocks. These preferred shares were issued by PLDT as part of the restructuring of Pilipino Telephone Corp. in the late 1990s.

PLDT said the company could not issue new shares because it would dilute the holdings of existing shareholders.

PLDT senior vice president Annabelle Chua said that more than eight million preferred shares have yet to be converted into common shares. Those holding these preferred shares can convert into common shares between now and 2009.

She said these shares combined would be equivalent to roughly 4-5 percent of PLDT.

Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd. will remain PLDT's biggest shareholder with a 24-percent interest.

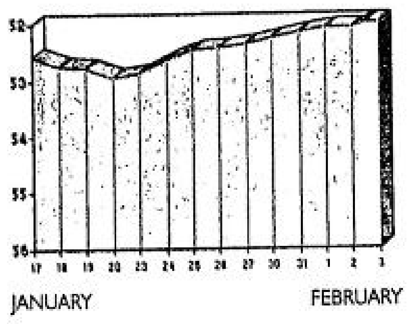
"The agreement is for the NTT group to have a slightly smaller stake in PLDT than First Pacific's," said PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan.

Sources said First Pacific and the NTT group struck a deal specifying that the Japanese group could not own more than 20 percent of PLDT.

NTT/ B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

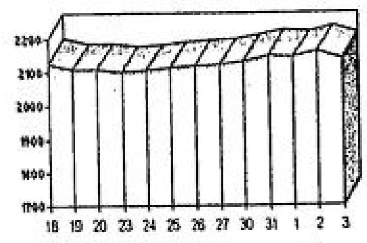
P51.91 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 3, 2006

¥118.50 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 3, 2006

GOLD: $570.50-571.00
per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 2, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Oil price worries, politics seen to dampen stocks



(See stock market report on Page B4)

RISING OIL PRICES AND CONtinued political noise are expected to keep investors wary this week despite kicking up a few notches last week.

BPI Trade said in its weekly report that crude prices, which closed below $65 a barrel, might continue to weigh on the market if it moved near $70.

Rumors of a coup to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo will also keep some market players distracted.

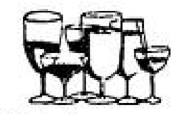
Last week, the stock market climbed 16.8 points or 0.79 percent to 2,138.71, boosted by strong economic growth numbers in the fourth quarter, higher earnings for banks and the implementation of the VAT rate increase to 12 percent last Feb. 1.

"GDP growth was below the government's target of 5.3 percent but it was above the forecasts given by the private sector," BPI Trade said.

It also said that market sentiment remained positive on corpo-

OIL PRICE/ B4

WHAT'S INSIDE



Mike's cousins, GMA headaches /B3

Surge in flour imports worries local millers /B16

Gov't eyes cut in oil import tax

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE SAID it might consider the proposal to further lower the duty on imported petroleum to mitigate the inflationary pressure created by the recent increase in the value-added tax.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said there was a need to implement additional measures to cushion the impact of the higher VAT on consumer's purchasing power.

He said implementing more mitigating measures would address the possible revival of proposals for a legislated wage increase, which the economy could not afford.

The increase in the VAT rate effective Feb. 1 elicited protests from militant groups as well as requests from transport operators for another fare adjustment.

The National Economic and Development Authority has projected that inflation could rise to 8.5 percent this year with the increase in the VAT rate.

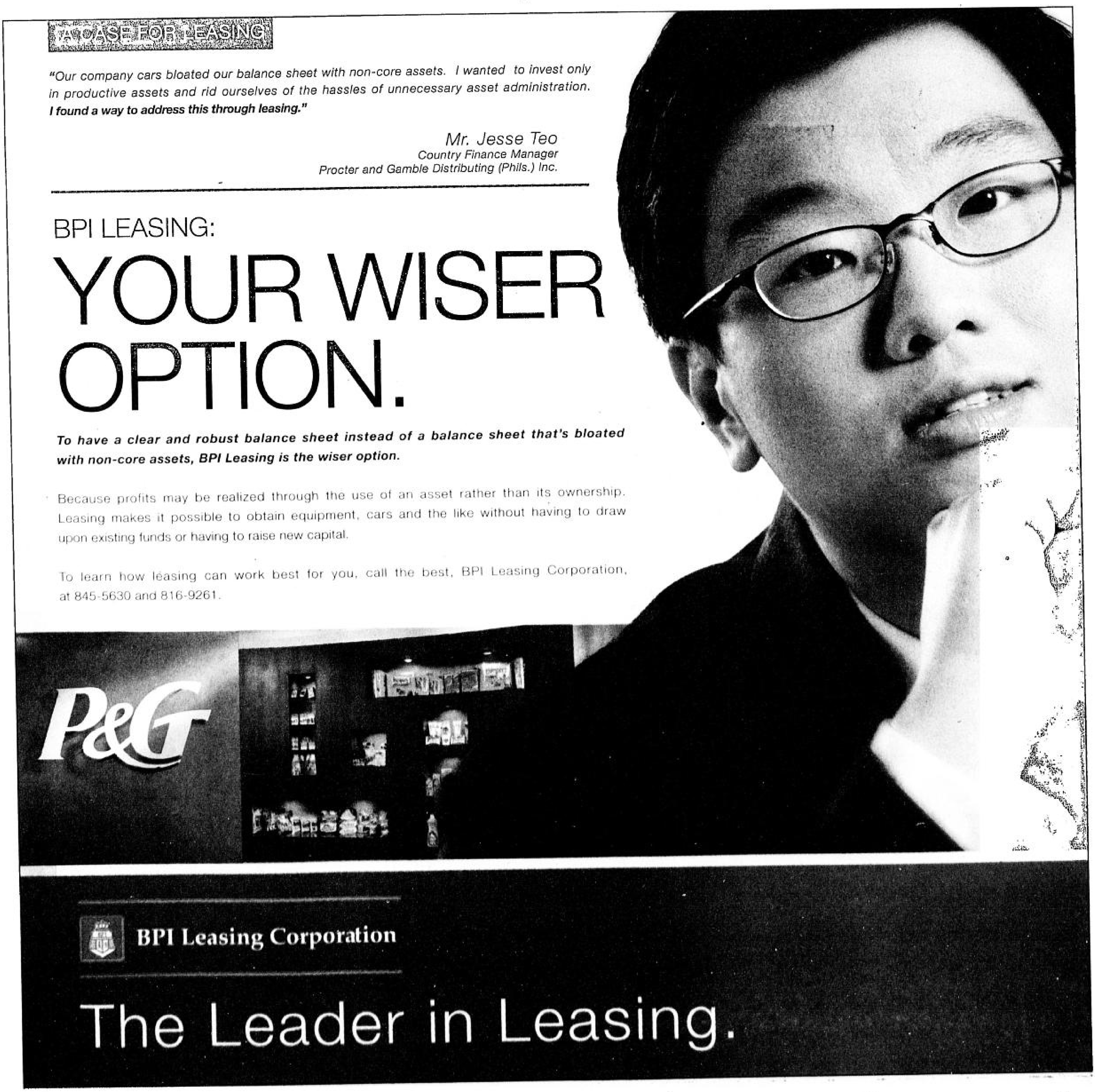
The implementation of the VAT law has expanded the coverage of the tax to include oil and electricity since Nov. 1 and has increased the tax rate by 2 percentage points since last Wednesday.

When the VAT Reform Law was implemented in Nov. 1, initial mitigating measures were already implemented. These included the removal of the excise tax on diesel, kerosene and bunker fuel, the lifting of the franchise tax on power distribution utilities, and the lowering of the duty on petroleum from 5 to 3 percent.

But although agricultural products, which account for the bulk of low-income earners' food basket, are exempted from VAT, officials admitted that there might be a slight increase in their prices given that the previously VAT-exempt oil, a basic input for production, is now covered by the tax.

The Arroyo administration has asked the public to bite the bullet now and give the VAT Reform Law a chance, promising that the tax mea-

GOV'T/ B4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Unemployment to drop to 7.1% in '06, Neda says

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT Authority has projected that the country's unemployment rate would drop to only 7.1 percent this year, as several industries were seen poised for expansion.

The unemployment rate was estimated to have hit 7.7 percent in 2005.

The Neda's forecast assumes that some 1.32 million jobs will be created this year, exceeding the government's target of 1 million new jobs.

The projection of better employment figures this year comes with Neda's forecast that the country's economy, as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP), would grow by between 5.7 and 6.3 percent, or higher than the 5.1-percent growth recorded last year.

Dennis Arroyo, Neda director for policy and planning, said the government expected a rebound in the agriculture sector this year due to good weather.

Agriculture is one of the major drivers of economic growth in the Philippines.

Last year, the El Niño weather phenomenon, which is marked by a long, dry spell, was blamed for the decline in output and lower demand for manpower in the agriculture sector.

The export sector was likewise seen set for a recovery from last year's slowdown.

The Philippines' export sector, led by the electronics sector, last year registered a disappointing 2.3-percent growth, far short of the government's target of 10 percent.

The Neda official also credited the expansion of the call center, mining, tourism and construction industries this year for the projected decline in the unemployment rate.

"We all know that construction is a very labor-intensive industry and so we see a substantial growth in the number of jobs in that sector," Arroyo said.

Heightened activity in the construction sector was partly attributed to the booming call center industry, which requires the establishment of more office spaces, and to the government's economic pump-priming initiative for 2006.

The Department of Budget and Management said that 30 percent of the expected additional revenues from the VAT Reform Law would be allotted for infrastructure development and basic services.

The law is estimated to generate P75 billion in additional revenues this year.

Arroyo also said the national government has included in its 2006 agenda the provision of more funds for the development of small and medium enterprises (SME).

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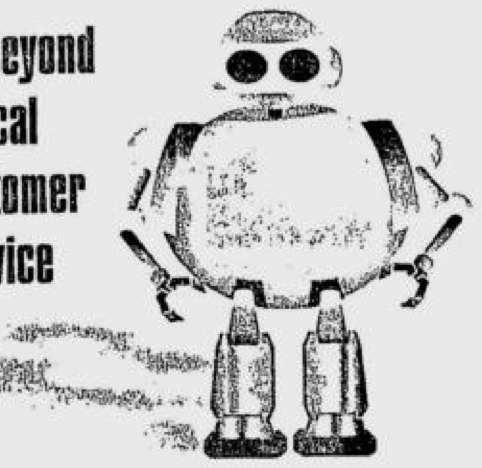

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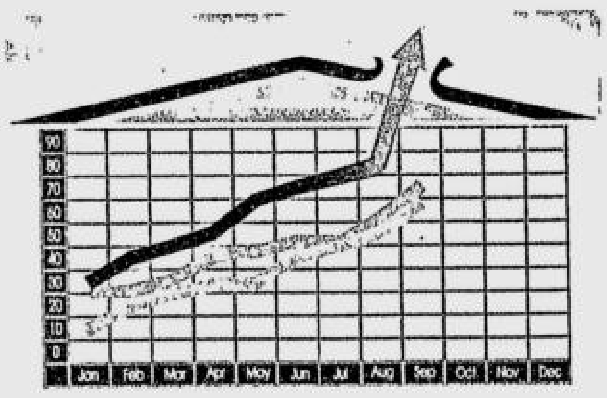

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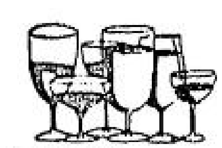

Victor C. Agustin

HELICOPTER RIDES are not recommended to senior citizens, and even to healthy young thugs, especially when Davao Mayor Rodrigo Duterte is doing the invite; nevertheless, SEC Chair Fe Barin took one last week to Albay, because her fellow Capampangan, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, asked her to.

The Albay trip was ostensibly to help resolve the Lafayette mining crisis, but the President took Barin for the ride to discuss, if the grapevine is to be believed, the slow, steady implosion of the pre-need industry.

What could lend a political dimension to the financial problem is that a cousin of GMA husband Mike Arroyo, Carlos "Linggoy" Araneta, is not only a partner in one floundering company, but is being sued by another company where GMA's younger brother, Diosdado "Boboy" Macapagal Jr., happens to also be a partner.

Happily, such a political fallout may now be averted, according to the grapevine, with the industry and the Securities and Exchange Commission having found a formula, better than what the Yuchengcos did for Pacific Plans, to placate the restive plan holders.

The solution essentially involves the conversion of the pre-need company into a mutualized company owned by the plan holders, with the former owners being diluted and reduced to professional help, who will then expand the pre-need company into a diversified financial services firm.

Barin is expected to announce the industry solution shortly, which, hopefully would arrest the industry-wide sales decline that had already decimated the erstwhile industry leader, College Assurance Plan.

Over at the Senate, opposition senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sergio Osmeña III have begun collecting documentary evidence on how Malacañang nominees in Philcomsat Holdings have transformed the listed company into a private pawnshop for Mike Arroyo's cousins, Benito "Bomboy" Araneta and his illiquid cousin Antonio Araneta.

As an added political ammunition, the cousin-to-cousin lending facility that involved

COCKTALES/ B4

NTT to raise…

From page B1

First Pacific will not allow any other entity to have a bigger stake in its most-prized investment in Asia. PLDT is the country's most profitable telecom company. It is expected to announce a 2005 net profit that could exceed P33 billion, according to INQUIRER sources.

The 20-percent ceiling set for the NTT group was included in the cooperation agreement signed by PLDT, DoCoMo, NTT Com and First Pacific on Jan. 31, the same day DoCoMo agreed to buy 12.63 million shares of PDT from NTT Com for $440 million.

"The addition of DoCoMo as strategic partner will certainly enhance our ability to develop attractive 3G offerings for our market," said PLDT president Napoleon Nazareno.

DoCoMo will allow Smart Communications Inc., a wholly owned mobile unit of PLDT, to offer its patented i-mode service.

I-mode is NTT DoCoMo's mobile Internet platform that gives users easy access to more than 100,000 Internet sites as well as services like e-mail, online shopping and banking, ticket reservations, and restaurant guides at supposedly affordable rates.

"DoCoMo's experience in this technology is unmatched. We are excited to introduce i-mode in the Philippines to give our subscribers the most innovative services," Nazareno said.

I-mode will be "one of Smart's killer applications" for its upcoming 3G service. "No other local operator will have a similar service," said a PLDT executive.

DoCoMo also operates the third-generation or 3G wireless technology in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. DoCoMo is an abbreviation of Do Communications Over the Mobile Network.

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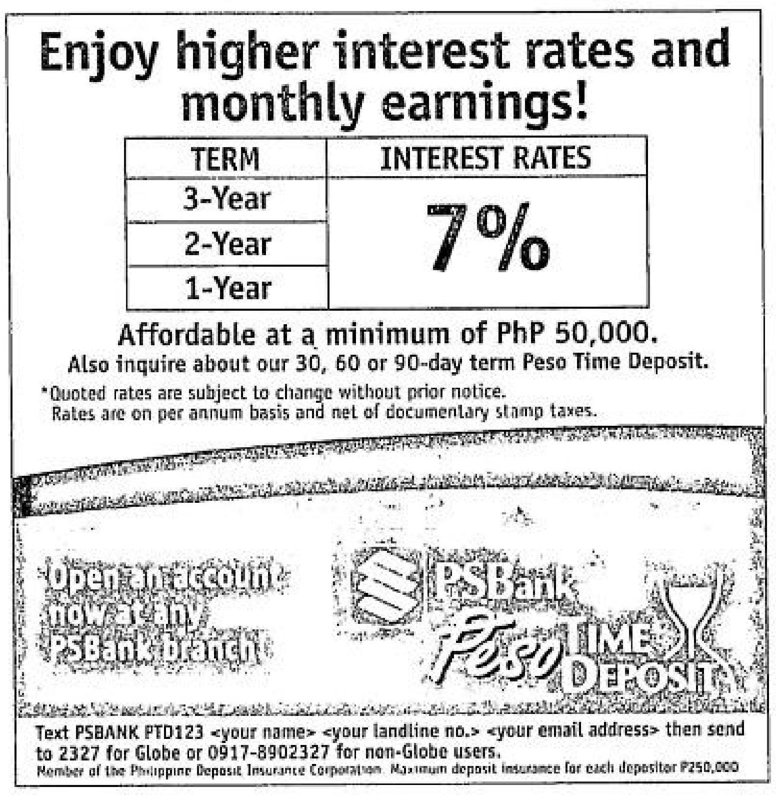

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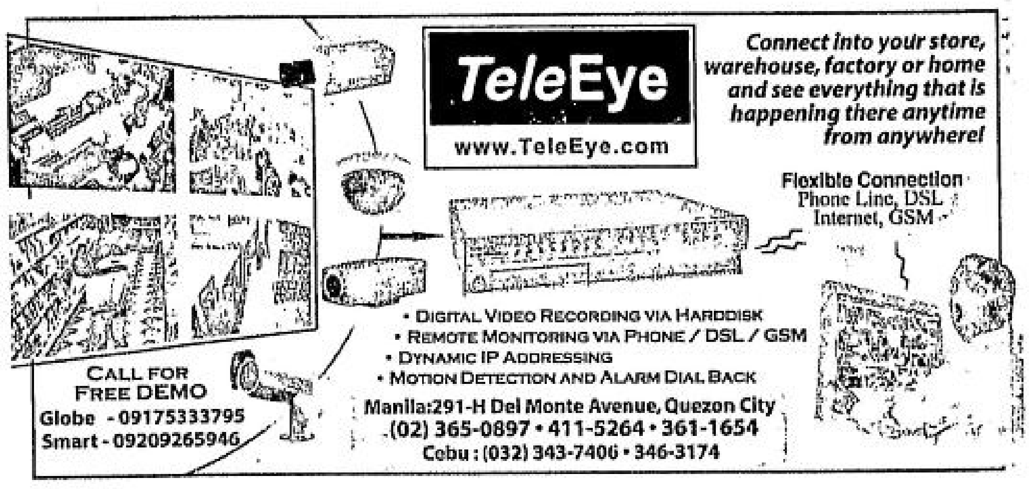

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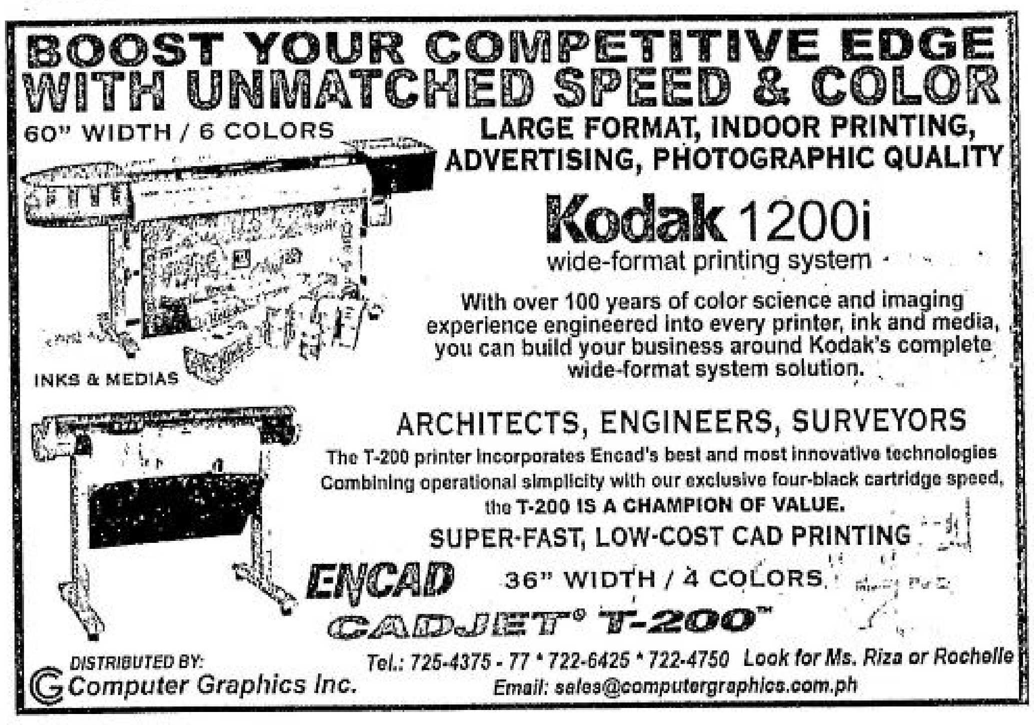

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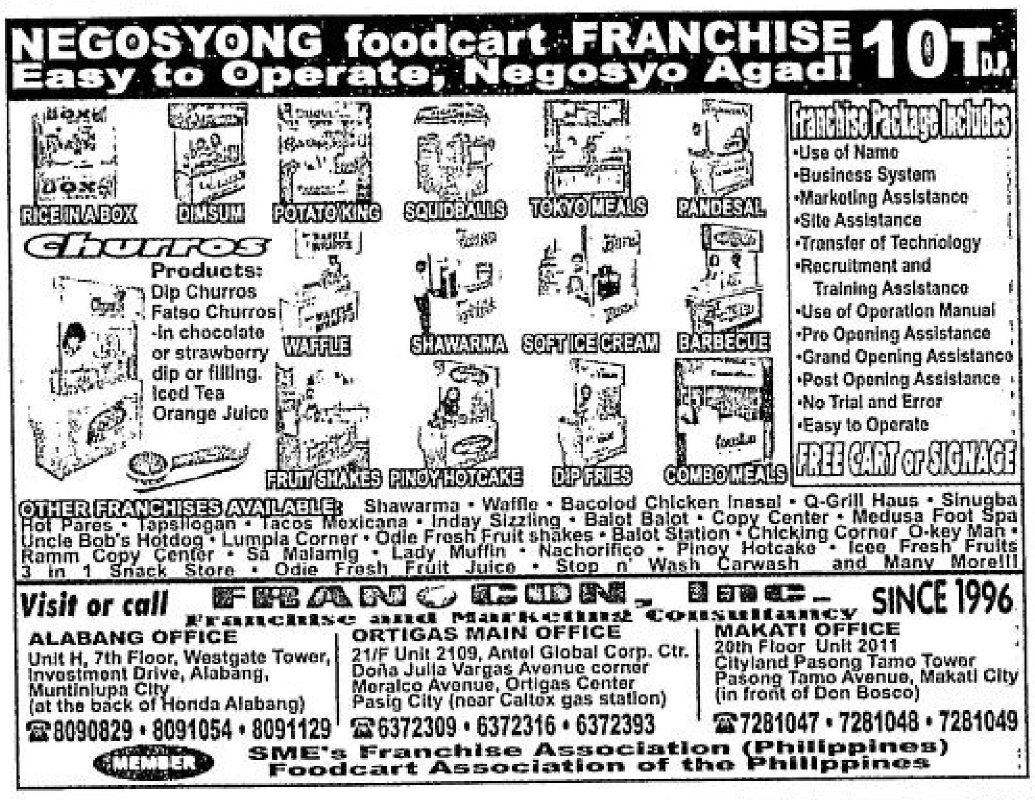

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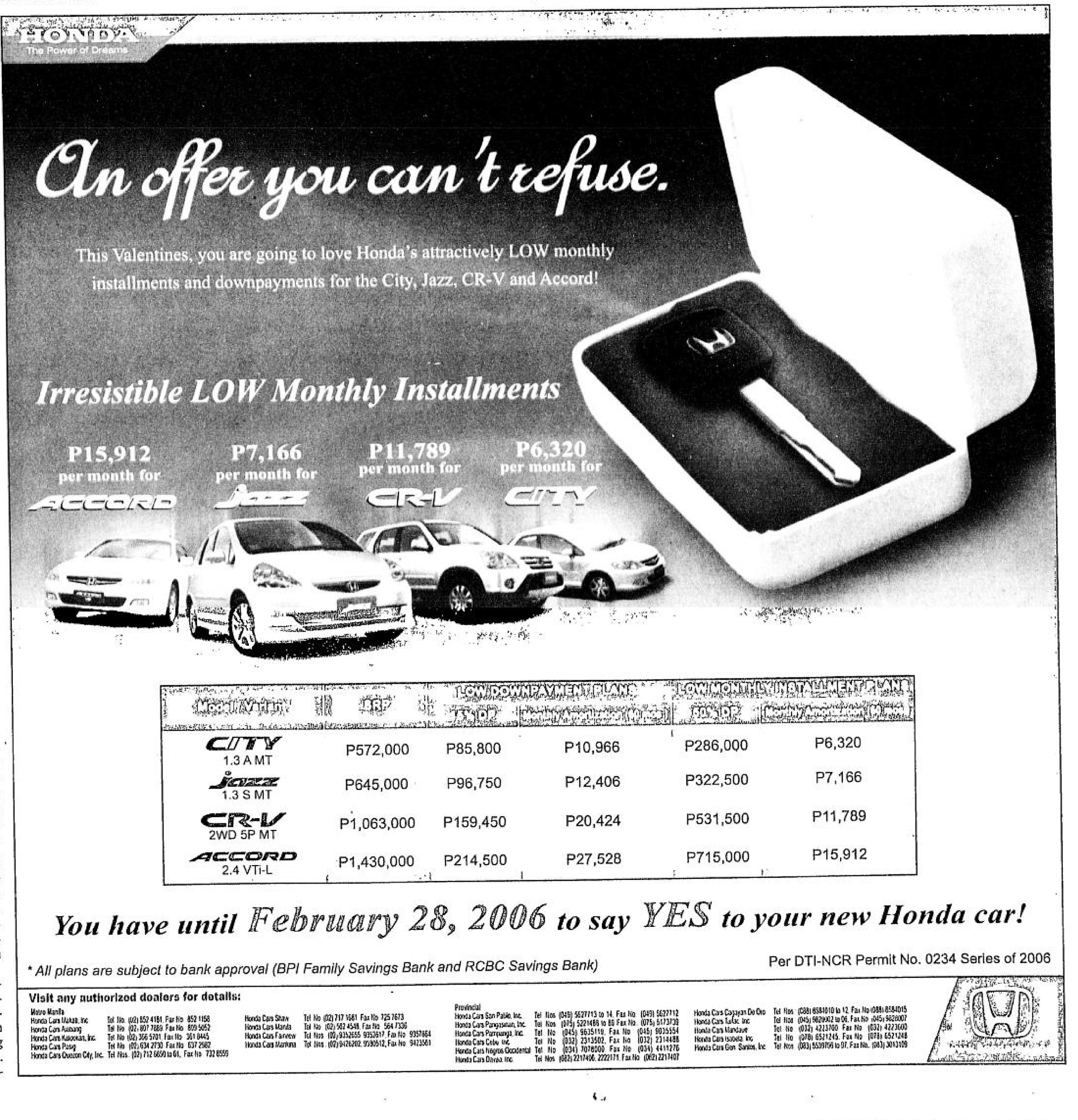

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Ayala Land to spend P10B in '06

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY GIANT AYALA LAND INC. EXPECTS to spend around P10 billion for various projects this year, about the same budget it allocated in 2005, as it remains optimistic about the real estate market.

ALI president Jaime Ayala said after a press briefing last Friday that the outlook on the property sector was hinged on favorable economic conditions.

"If we continue to have the environment right now, a fairly stable peso, low interest rates, the OFW (overseas Filipino workers) market remains strong, we feel that there could be additional expansion," Ayala said, "If real-estate is strong, investments are strong and employment increases. It has a multiplier effect."

One of its projects is Greenbelt 5, spanning 35,000 square meters of leasable space, which is scheduled for completion by 2007.

ALI chief finance officer Jaime Ysmael said the property company was spending over P1 billion for Greenbelt 5, which broke ground last year.

ALI is also spending P3 billion for a new mall in Quezon City, next to the MRT Station on North Edsa.

The North Triangle Commercial Center, Ayala's ongoing 200,000-square-meter mall development, was expected to be completed by the middle of next year.

Avida Land, ALI's mass housing arm, has also lined up projects this year, including a residential project called Avida Towers at the Old San Lazaro race track in Manila, a three-hectare house and lot project in joint venture with Ayala Corp. at San Isidro , Batangas, and another house and lot project in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Community Innovations Inc., ALI's high-rise development and residential arm for urban professionals, launched its 202-townhouse project called Celadon Residences last year.

It also launched last year its 780 condominium unit- project called The Columns at Legaspi Village.

ALI is also redefining Fort Bonifacio Global City to cater to growing demand for office spaces.

ALI's key business process outsourcing buildings are also expected to increase office revenues in the succeeding quarters.

ALI's first BPO facility, PeopleSupport Center, was completed in April 2005, and Convergys, its second BPO bldg was completed in October 2005.

Outside of Metro Manila, ALI broke ground on a 2-storey Infonxx Bldg in Sta. Rosa, Laguna in July last year, which has 5,612 square meters of gross leasable area .

Infonxx was completed in November 2005 and would provide jobs for some 1,200 call center professionals.

ALI's program to increase shareholder value remains on track through projects such as Anvaya Cove, an integrated leisure and residential project located in Morong Bataan, launched last July.

ALI's affiliate Cebu Holdings Inc. also launched Amara , a high end residential subdivision in Cebu last October, while Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. started development for a BPO office building last December.

Slower but surprising

No Free Lunch

Cielito F Habito

THE PRELIMINARY FIGURES RELEASED last week by the government on the yearend economic growth data was generally welcome news, even though as usual, it was a mix of good news and bad news. This paper's headline story described the growth figures exactly as I have titled my column above.

The good (surprising) news about it was that the reported growth in the economy was higher than most expectations. Most analysts, including yours truly, had projected the domestic economy to grow at less than 5 percent for the whole year. But the reported growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 5.1 for the year, with the fourth quarter alone growing by 6.1 percent over the same period in the previous year.

The bad news was that almost across the board, growth in the production sectors of the economy had slowed down from the previous year. It was a mix of actual contraction in certain sectors of the economy, and actual improvement on the previous year's performance for a few sectors.

The good news

Which sectors actually improved? The welcome news is that industry as a whole, and manufacturing in particular, appear to have done slightly better than in 2004. Overall industry growth inched up from 5.2 percent in 2004 to 5.3 percent last year. Driving this improvement was the speeding up of growth in manufacturing, which posted 5.6 percent, against 5.1 percent in 2004. Leading the way were furniture and fixtures, petroleum refining, and the chemical industries. But there is a longer list of losers than gainers in manufacturing, led by wood and cork products, non-electrical machinery, non-metallic mineral products and publishing/printing. This suggests that the base of growth in manufacturing was relatively narrow.

Mining, particularly of nickel and copper, lifted the sector with a 24.8-percent growth in the last quarter, yielding a 9.3-percent full-year growth. It only managed 2.6 percent in 2004. The other two sub-sectors in industry, construction and utilities, both slowed down significantly from their previous year's performance, but not enough to prevent an overall improvement in industry growth.

Finance takes the lead

In services, the only sub-sector that did better—and substantially better at that—was the finance sector, i.e. banks and insurance (15.4 percent against 8.4 percent in 2004). Not even the reported 44-percent contraction in the preneed industry dampened the growth in the banking business enough to prevent a spectacular performance for the finance sector. In fact, finance has outstripped communication as the fastest-growing services sub-sector. For all our fondness with the cell phone, communication only managed a slower 14.8-percent growth this past year, against 15.6 the year before.

In agriculture, banana and coconut were the only bright spots. The rest of the crop, livestock and fishery sub-sectors did worse than in 2004.

That's where the good news ends. There's actually a much longer list of bad news, but I'm not devoting a proportionate amount of space to them; I've been coming across too much lately as a public pessimist. There is one important item worth mentioning, though.

Confidence margin

The margin of error in the latest economic data appears to be wider than before, and this weakens confidence that the preliminary figures reflect the actual performance of the economy at yearend. A closer examination of the data reveals that the item called "statistical discrepancy" was unusually large in the fourth quarter (about P22 billion)—more than 3 times the average level in the first 3 quarters, in fact. This statistical discrepancy represents the difference between the estimate of GDP using sectoral output data (the "output approach") and the estimate using spending data (the "expenditure approach").

Statistics czar Dr. Romulo Virola assures me that that higher estimate from the output side is usually the more reliable figure, especially because data from the expenditure side takes longer to complete. Still, the unusually high discrepancy invites doubt on the level of confidence one could have with the admittedly preliminary (and NSCB always emphasizes this word) data. We all need to wait until May to get the real score.

Adjusted growth

I did some quick calculations to check what the growth rates would have been without the statistical discrepancy, and if the discrepancy had been at a more "normal" level. If one uses the lower estimates from the expenditure side, the fourth-quarter growth would have been only 3 percent, rather than the 6.1 percent reported. On the other hand, if the statistical discrepancy had been more "normal," i.e. in the P7 billion range, the fourth-quarter growth would have been only 3.5 percent.

This, of course, would change everything. Full-year growth would have been much closer to what all the analysts had always predicted. And perhaps the INQUIRER wouldn't have described it in its headline as "surprising" at all.

A more extensive analysis of the full-year economic performance and much more will be featured in Ateneo's upcoming Eagle Watch Economic and Political Briefing on Wednesday, Feb. 8 at the Ateneo Rockwell campus. *Call 426-5661 or e-mail me at chabito@ateneo.edu for details or reservations.*

Oil price . . .

From page B1

rate earnings results last year and in 2006.

Bank of the Philippine Islands reported its net profits jumped to P8.1 billion while Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. recorded profit at P4.36 billion last year.

This week, the Ayala Group and telecom firms will report fourth-quarter results.

"The introduction of 3G technology is likely to boost interest in the telecom sector. We expect investors to be positioning ahead of the release of 2005 earnings," BPI Trade said.

Profit taking also ensued last week after the Supreme Court voided a rate hike granted by the Energy Regulatory Commission to Manila Electric Co. and news of weakness in the US markets. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Cocktales

From page B3

sequestered and private shareholder funds was approved by no less than Mike Arroyo's uncle, the 89-year-old Philcomsat Holdings president/CEO, Manuel Nieto Jr.

Given his age and declining health, it was not clear if Nieto was aware of the import of his action, where P390 million in corporate funds where sunk into a dormant Alabang lot.

The corporate skullduggery in Philcomsat Holdings have already prompted no less than the Supreme Court to suspend for three months the corporate secretary/director, Bro. Eddie counsel Luis Lokin Jr., who himself is now caught in another fight between the preacher and Bomboy Araneta over a botched TV venture. But that is another story.

Ricky's P1B trick

IF YOU notice Enrique "Ricky" Razon Jr. exhibiting less eye twitch these days, it is because the port services king is riding on the wave of a P1-billion cash windfall that his International Container Terminal Services Inc. had just received.

ICTSI disclosed that its wholly owned subsidiary, ICTSI Warehousing, was the block seller of P1 billion worth of ICTSI stocks Monday and Tuesday last week, executed in two cross-sales by Wilson Sy's Wealth Securities.

Razon, who was in London at the same time last week, would only say that the buyer was a "foreign" group. What is lending additional mystery to the transaction, involving a total of 90 million shares, is that ICTSI Warehousing held only 979,000 shares of ICTSI as of end-2005.

According to the grapevine, the ICTSI subsidiary is still keeping more than 300 million scriptless ICTSI shares, which it acquired for less than a peso years ago.

At Friday's market closing, that pile is worth P3.6 billion.

Heard through the grapevine

THE Equitable PCIBank board, after an emotionally charged session Friday, decided to defer for next week's meeting a proposal tabled by the GSIS, which is to auction the 10-percent "treasury" shares alongside that of the government pension fund's 12-percent block.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,100,000/Pls. Call*	
Alta Vista B/Corp.*	-	500,000/300,000*
Baguio Country Club	-	500,000
Calatagan Golf	Pls. Call	40,000
Camp John Hay	-	Pls. Call
Canlubang Golf	530,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	120,000	-
Capitol Hills	70,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports	120,000	100,000
City Sports Club Cebu	-	380,000
Club Filipino	140,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	180,000	150,000/Pls. Call*/350,000**
Eastridge A/B*	Pls. Call	-
Evercrest	65,000	-
Fairways & Bluewater	250,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	120,000/200,000*	150,000*
Luisita Golf	Pls. Call	270,000
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	-
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	11,000,000
Manila Polo	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Southwoods A/B*	350,000/Pls. Call*	300,000/700,000*
Makati Sports Club	200,000	165,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	350,000	250,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/150,000*	90,000
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls. Call	150,000
Mt. Malarayat A	230,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/Pls. Call*/400,000**	150,000
Punta Fuego	400,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	120,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/150,000*/250,000**	130,000*
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	180,000
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150,000**	80,000*
Spa & Lodge	520,000	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	Pls. Call	1,100,000/1,600,000*
The Palms Country Club	550,000	350,000
Tagaytay Country Club	330,000	300,000
Tagaytay Highlands	730,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls. Call	630,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Tower Club	140,000	-
Valley Golf	200,000	190,000
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,350,000	6,000,000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,175,000	1,000,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,050,000
Anvaya Cove Beach & Nature Club	Please Call	
Baguio Country Club	540,000	500,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	20,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	120,000	80,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	165,000
Canlubang	550,000	500,000
Capitol Hills	60,000	-
Cebu Country Club	-	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	-
Club Filipino	140,000	100,000
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	-
Forest Hills "A"	130,000	90,000
Forest Hills "B"	200,000	-
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	165,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	11,000,000	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,000,000
Manila Polo	2,300,000	2,200,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	340,000	310,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	Please Call	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	400,000	-
Metroclub "A"	120,000	90,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	450,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	250,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	350,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "A"	210,000	140,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	400,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	160,000	125,000
Rockwell	Please Call	-
Spa & Lodge	400,000	-
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	1,100,000
Sta. Elena "B"	-	1,500,000
Tagaytay Country Club	330,000	310,000
Tagaytay Highlands	Please Call	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	750,000	630,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	85,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	190,000	-
Valley Golf	220,000	190,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,350,000	6,000,000

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	as of 1/26/2006	as of 2/02/2006
Philamlife Dollar Bond Fund	1.1376	1.1423
Philamlife Global Bond Fund	1.0652	1.0664

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Investment Funds	Net Asset Value Per Unit (NAVPU)	
	as of 1/26/2006	as of 2/02/2006
Philamlife Fixed Income Fund	1.1925	1.1944
Philamlife Equity Fund	1.1677	1.1913

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Feb. 3, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	37	37	35.5	36	16,528,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59.5	58.5	58.5	3,785,500
China Banking Corp.	610	610	605	605	1,010
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	62	62	61.5	62	13,100
International Exch. Bank	21	21	21	21	22,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	32.5	31	32.5	1,521,100
Philippine National Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	15,700
Phil. Savings Bank	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5	8,000
Security Bank Corp.	39	39	38	38	39,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	35.5	35.5	35	35	56,700
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	15,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	145	145	145	145	10,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2135	2135	2135	2135	370
Ivantage Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	11,290,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	47.5	47.5	46.5	47	485,400
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	14	13.75	13.75	65,700
Manila Electric Co. B	21	21	20.25	20.75	521,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	4,290,000
Petron Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.65	1,437,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	40,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	60,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	19,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	23	23	1,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	37.5	37.5	37	37	425,200
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	130,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.68	1.72	1.68	1.72	127,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	63	62	63	103,000
San Miguel Corp. B	85	85.5	84.5	85.5	69,500
Universal Robina Corp.	18.5	18.5	18.25	18.25	31,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	10,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.14	1.16	3,266,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	2,250,000
CHEMICALS					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	6,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	50,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.4	170,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.7	0.7	220,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	18,900,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	5,700,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	5,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.009	106,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.011	0.012	0.0095	0.01	20,000,000
Ayala Corp.	337.5	337.5	335	335	61,420
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	190,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	251,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	14,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	1,225,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.87	0.89	0.87	0.89	1,090,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.82	1.82	106,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.7	8.7	16,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.04	11,928,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.1	3.25	3.1	3.15	3,000,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	20,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	30,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	247,000
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.45	192,000
Keppel Holdings	1	1	1	1	10,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	10,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	3,900,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	2,300,000
SM Investments Corp.	233	233	228	228	26,920
South China Resources Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	6,600,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.145	0.155	0.13	0.135	8,900,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	11.25	11.25	11	11	11,704,600
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.33	0.33	120,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.04	1,317,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	100,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.205	2,500,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.56	1,054,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	30,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	1,810,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	3,660,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.54	5,393,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	3,200,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	400,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.46	2,756,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	9,440,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	600,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	150,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	40,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	81,000
SM Development Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8	8.2	8	8.2	5,292,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	1,130,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.25	12.25	12	12	22,900
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.89	1,520,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	7650	765	755	755	40,280
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.35	3.35	277,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1890	1890	1855	1855	67,810
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	2,200,000
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	3,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.055	0.0525	0.055	22,500,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	142,000
Philweb Corp.	0.032	0.03	0.026	0.03	1,723,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	120	12	12	12	179,300
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.71	520,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.26	1.3	1.26	1.38	65,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.68	1.7	1.68	1.7	12,305,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.43	0.46	0.37	0.37	12,840,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	73,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.2	1.28	32,000
Paxys Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.8	955,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.18	1.2	1.16	1.18	1,567,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.62	1.62	1.46	1.46	623,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.007	5,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6	6.2	6	6	669,000
Benguet Corp. A	7	7.1	7	7	25,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	156,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.23	0.22	0.22	9,140,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	5,390,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.016	97,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	105,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.74	1.9	1.74	1.84	57,083,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.14	2.16	2.02	2.04	20,477,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	25.5	26	25.5	26	395,200
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	120,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	10,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	1,070,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	70,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	73,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,700
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12	12	12	12	158,800

CURRENCIES

February 5, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.826446	1.000000	52.0970
Japan	Yen	0.006974	0.008439	0.4396
United Kingdom	Pound	1.471570	1.780600	92.7639
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106547	0.128922	6.7164
Switzerland	Franc	0.643099	0.778150	40.5393
Canada	Dollar	0.722165	0.873820	45.5234
Singapore	Dollar	0.506121	0.612407	31.9046
Australia	Dollar	0.623969	0.755002	39.3333
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.192688	2.653153	138.2213
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220362	0.266638	13.8910
Brunei	Dollar	0.504577	0.610538	31.8072
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000088	0.000107	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.020998	0.025407	1.3236
UAE	Dirham	0.225018	0.272272	14.1846
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.210000	63.0374
Argentina	Peso	0.269640	0.326264	16.9974
Brazil	Real	0.370023	0.447728	23.3253
Denmark	Kroner	0.133974	0.162109	8.4454
India	Rupee	0.018715	0.022645	1.1797
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220503	0.266809	13.8999
Mexico	New Peso	0.078755	0.095293	4.9645
New Zealand	Dollar	0.569492	0.689085	35.8993
South Africa	Rand	0.135913	0.164455	8.5676
Korea	Won	0.000850	0.001028	0.0536
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025879	0.031314	1.6314

Gov't eyes cut . . .

From page B1

sure would generate economic benefits in the long term.

Finance officials said that while bulk of the proceeds of the tax measure would cover part of the government's deficit, 30 percent would be allocated for infrastructure development and enhancement of the delivery of basic services.

The VAT Reform Law is considered the centerpiece of the administration's fiscal reform agenda, which also includes proposals such as simplifying the income tax system and rationalizing fiscal incentives granted to businesses.

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BRANCH MANAGER OF THE YEAR

KATHERINE L. YAP
Blue Pearl
UNIT MANAGER OF THE YEAR

MARIDEN I. FONDEVILLA
Borromeo Insurance Agency
PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

LEONIDES V. PEÑA
Tektite
AGENT OF THE YEAR

MARY ANN C. RAGAZA
Blue Pearl
ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

BRANCH OF THE YEAR
9 CONSECUTIVE YEARS
BLUE PEARL

PRU LIFE U.K. ANNUAL AWARDEES OF 2005

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CHINA JADE

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DIAMOND

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CLAIMS SERVICES

HAIDEE MARQUINEZ
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INFORMATION SYSTEMS DIVISION

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And as we mark our 10th anniversary this year, I encourage all of you to embrace our battle-cry "Rise and Shine" and face up to the challenges of 2006 with passion and commitment.

So, to all our employees and agency leaders, let us start each day by reminding ourselves that no obstacle is bigger than our dream of being a great company in this country.

Congratulations!

Bobby G. Madrid
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ONG, SHEILA L	CHINA JADE

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MANNAG, ANTONIO O	JASPER	BRONZE
HORTILLO, GERARD PATRICK P	RED ONYX	BRONZE
CHUA, GILBERT K	MICA	BRONZE
GO, VALENTIN S.	CHINA JADE	BRONZE
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GOCHINGCO, CECILIA B	CORAL	BRONZE

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GALBAN, MYRNA I	RUBY	BRONZE
BATALLONES, PHILLIPE R	CITRINE	BRONZE
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A BRIDGE TO STYLE AND NOVELTY

The rationale behind Ponticelli is its development into a township, surrounded with lush landscape, fringed by flower beds and protected by trees.

Walls will be covered with climbing ivies, while warm tones of yellow, red, and green with touches of orange will drape every structure.

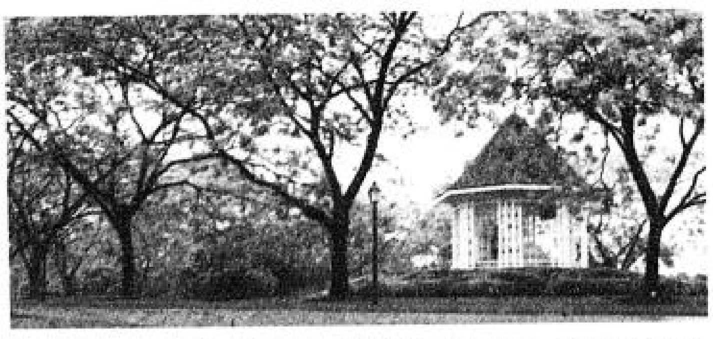
The property will be divided according to themes, using aesthetic bridge-like elements to separate one village sector from another. There are a variety of model houses to choose from, each with unique architecture designed to complement your taste and style.

ITALIAN GRANDEUR TO MAKE SPIRITS SOAR

The secret ingredient that makes Ponticelli distinct from other developments is its vital community considerations that revolve around the needs of its homeowners.

Ponticelli is best described as a full serving of pure comfort straight from nature's garden, with a dash of piquant home architecture - a recipe true to the Italian taste.

As you roam around the estate you will chance upon a stylish enclave of villas situated at the center of it all - The Villas of Ponticelli.

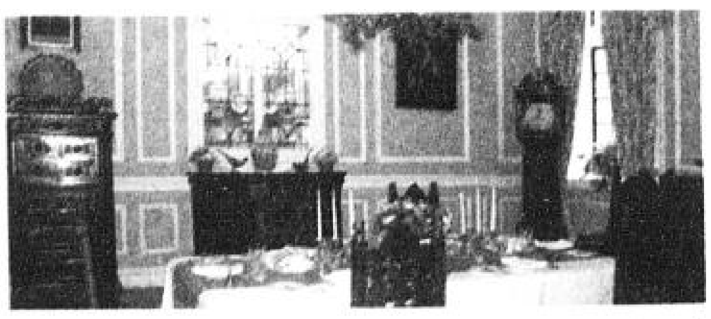


You can't miss what the community's planners and landscape architects are planning for each village sector, with each sector having its own elegant entrance. Each dividing arc will have a distinct crest, inspired by the traditional crops and food of Italy.

Indeed, Ponticelli is a heartwarming township for families and retirees, for those who have been dreaming of their own space, the fruit of success.

ITALIAN INSPIRED HOMES

The home design selections of Ponticelli are inspired by classic Italian architecture.



Wide windows allow cooling breezes to flow freely through the house. A prominent architectural feature of Italian-inspired homes is the surrounding porch and lanai, where one can just sit and relax while enjoying the scenic view of towering trees, while the floral ensembles help ease the day's stresses. A garden waits for your morning stroll. When the sun begins to hide behind the clouds, the view deck is the place to be.

COMPLETE AMENITIES

The unique enclave of Ponticelli will reflect the aspirations and independence of its residents by providing stimulating and enriching amenities.

Crown Asia realizes the importance of social interaction with neighbors. Thus, more comfortable common or shared areas are part of the grand plan. The elegant kitchen-gardens are available for residents and their guests, for cozy backyard parties.

Ensuring the residents' security twenty four hours a day is one of Ponticelli's main design goals. Entry of vehicles and designated transportation drop-off points will be controlled to further ensure exclusivity and privacy.

The Italian-inspired lifestyle of Ponticelli will be complemented with well-integrated facilities and amenities such as clubhouse, swimming pool, sports facilities, children's playground, nature parks and picnic areas.

Homes Along the Main Drives

Rinaldi. This 192 square meter wide home offers 3 bedrooms, a spacious master's bedroom that comes with its own toilet and bath and a walk-in closet. The den can be converted into an office and is conveniently set across the dining room.

The garage can accommodate 2 cars. Even the housekeeper has his or her own bedroom with toilet, located right beside the service area.

Santini. 171 square meter wide, this lovely abode is ideal for medium-sized family. It features 3 bedrooms with generous space. The master's bedroom has its own toilet and bath and walk-in closet while the other two bedrooms share a common toilet and bath.

The partition that separates every room is well-planned. The lanai is placed right where the dining area is to give you a nice view of your garden while you and your family enjoy a hearty meal.

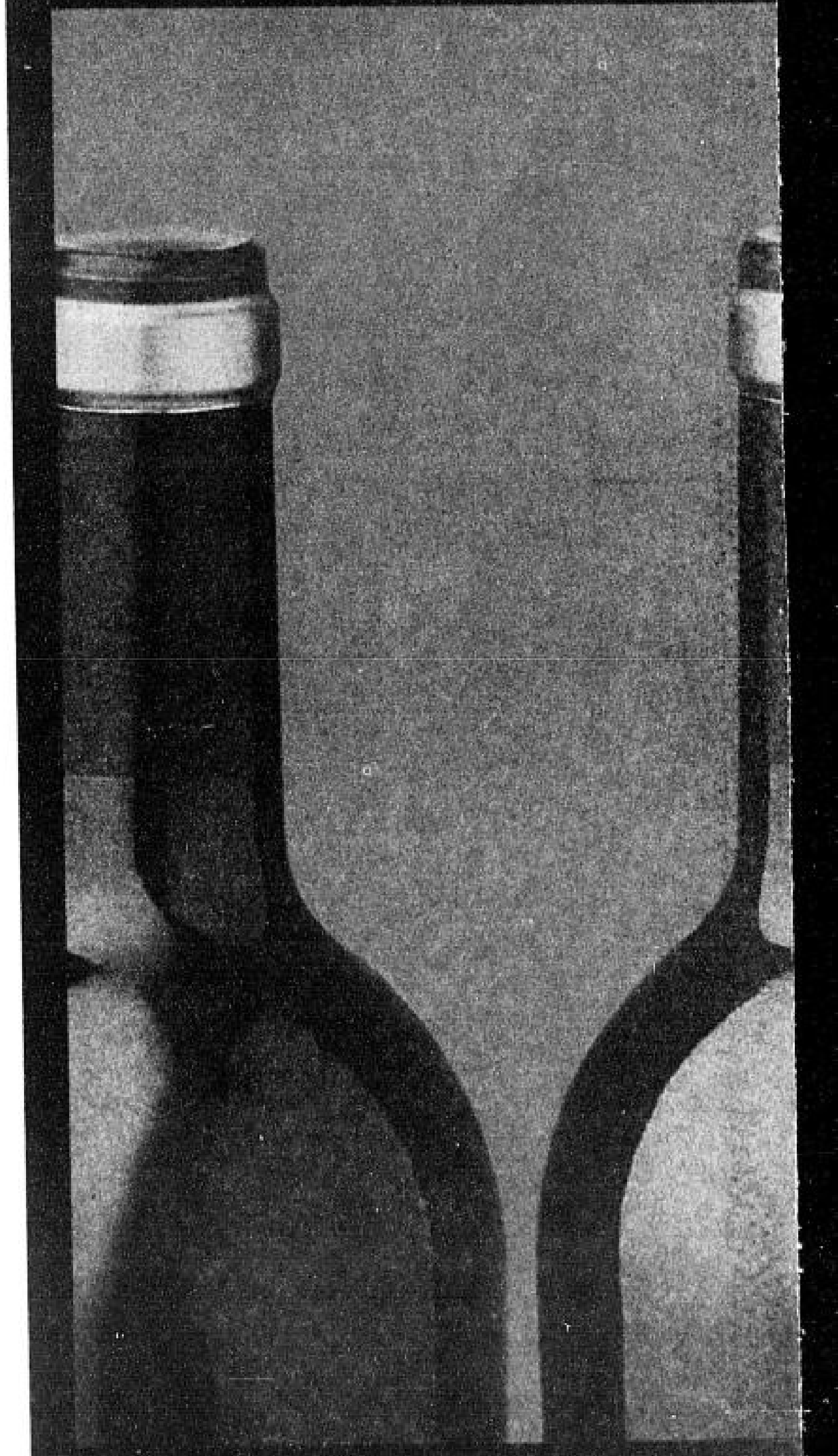
Home Along the Private Streets

Rossi. If you are looking for a more laid-back setting, this 141 square meter home has this and much more.

Aside from its 3 spacious bedrooms, it showcases 3 toilets and baths and a maid's quarters. The living room and family area are also spacious enough to accommodate guests and other gatherings.

You can have your own home along the main drive for as low as ***Php 36,000++ monthly amortization*** or a home along the private streets for as low as ***Php 29,000++ monthly amortization.***

The Birth



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Get Closer to Life's Essentials

At Ponticelli, access to everything you need is top on the list. The community is strategically situated in the fast-growing centers of the South. It's just a 5-minute drive to Alabang, offering its residents urban convenience. They're close to work areas, universities and commercial establishments.

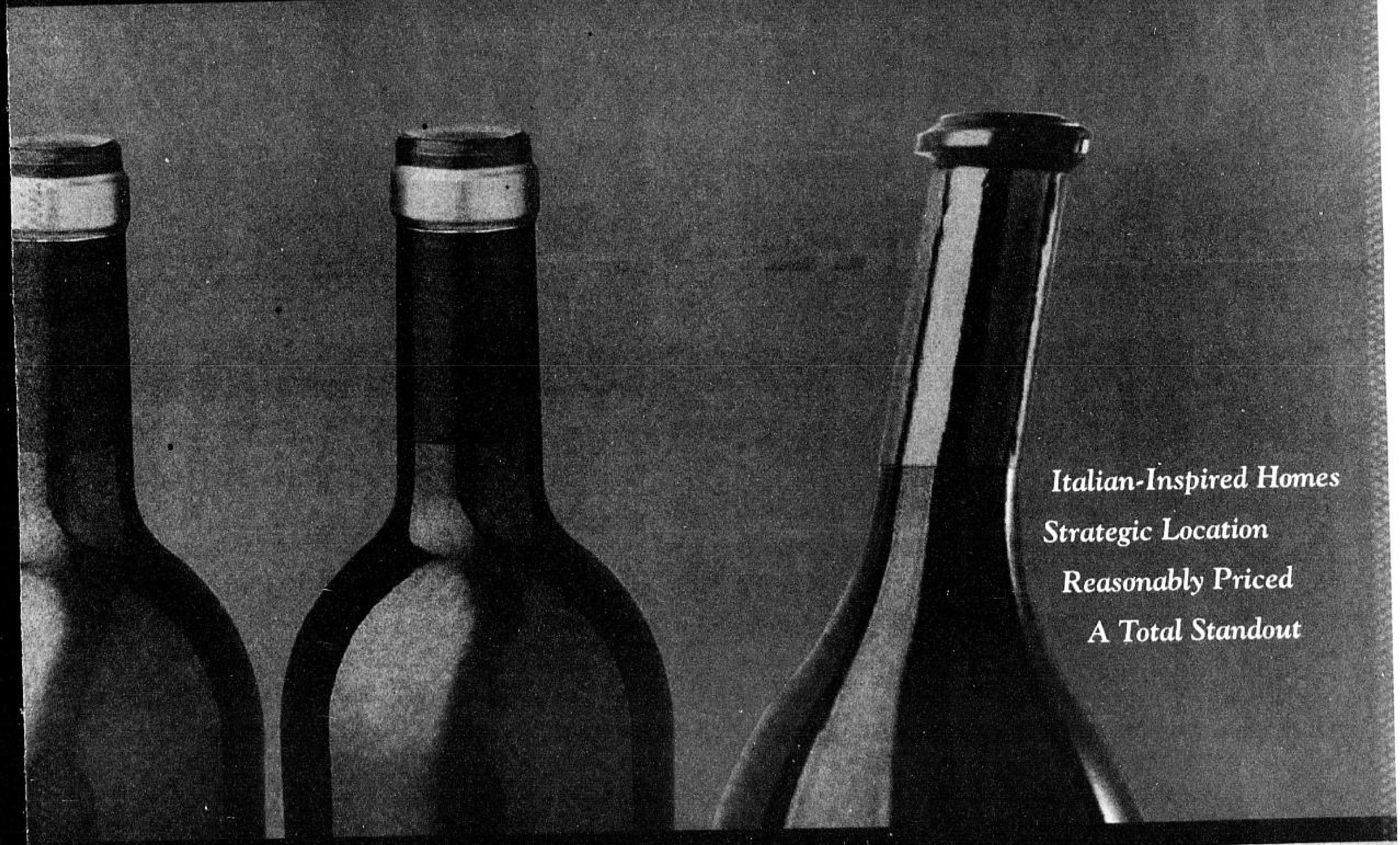
Yet within its landscaped perimeter walls, Ponticelli will always have its quiet country charm. It will give its residents that sought after laid-back, stress-free lifestyle, perfect for raising a family.

Pedestrian friendly tree-lined paths will make afternoon walks a welcome respite at the end of the day.

A short drive via Daang Hari Road will bring you to Madrigal Business Park at the Alabang Town Center. Access via Filinvest Exit will bring you to SLEX, for a quick jaunt to Makati. Asian Hospital is just minutes away from Ponticelli and exclusive schools are also close by.

ponticelli
Daang Hari-Alabang

IT PAYS TO BE DIFFERENT



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nfortable and interesting. Walkabout tours will be available on Saturday, February 11, 2006.

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Budget-conscious Pinoys still buy gadgets despite new taxes

Electronic gadgets are still in demand despite the imposition of higher taxes

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

FILIPINOS SEEM TO ENJOY BUYING THE latest in personal digital technologies even if new taxes have been imposed on all consumer items, according to an executive of specialty appliance shop Avant.

Avant Business Development Manager Walter Lim said there is still an optimistic picture for electronic devices in the country, including consumer digital products and traditional home appliances. This is especially so as brand manufacturers continue introducing new products.

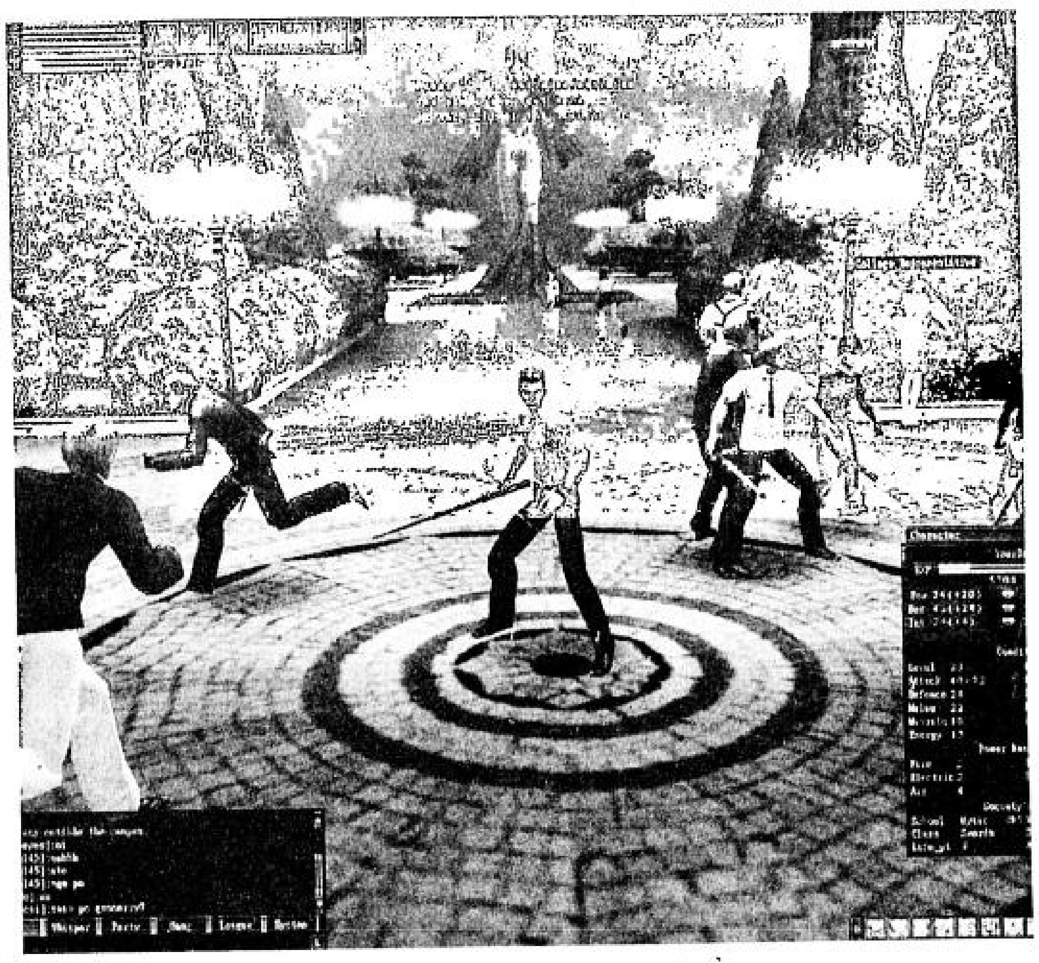
Not even the imposition of a 70-percent cap on the value added tax could have a major effect on the buying behavior of Filipinos who desire the latest digital equipment.

In fact, consumers may not have to worry about skyrocketing prices of products as suppliers try to shoulder the extra cost of EVAT to avoid pushing away their customers. If the price cannot be controlled, at least the new functions of an upcoming item would compensate for the increase.

"For instance, an ordinary MP3 player a few years back could only play a few songs. Now a person can buy a new MP3 player with picture screen capabilities, bigger memory capacity, and longer battery life at the same price," Lim said.

Lim said Avant is looking forward to a better year in 2006, especially with the introduction of new convergent technologies that cater to personal computing. Among these would be personal digital assistant phones, lighter and more wireless notebooks, and handheld multimedia players.

"I don't think there would be a major slowdown in the consumer electronics industry in the Philippines for now, especially with new technologies that are still priced lower than previous models," Lim said.



ONLINE games are increasingly becoming popular in the Philippines.

Filipinos spend 2 to 4 hours playing online games

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

FILIPINOS SPEND TWO TO FOUR HOURS playing online games, an executive of local online game publisher Netplay told Infotech.

Filipinos have also been predominantly buying retail pre-paid cards prescribe a certain amount of time to play a game, instead of subscribing to online games and paying monthly or yearly fees.

"Players spend around P100 to P150 a month on retail prepaid cards," said Ludwig Santos, president of Netplay, local publisher of the massively multiplayer online game Priston Tale. "Being Filipinos, we still like *tingi* (piece-meal sachet retail prices)," he added.

Priston Tale has about 500,000 registered users and an average of 1,000 new registrations a day.

Online game publishers are also resorting to more marketing gimmicks to promote loyalty among users.

Netplay recently signed up teen idol Angel Locsin to endorse Pristontale Philippines. Playing a Filipino version of a Wonder Woman-like heroine in Priston Tale, Locsin said that she particularly liked the game because she loves fantasy. She also plays a winged character in the local television and movie fantasy drama "Mulawin."

Netplay signed up Locsin to endorse the game because of feedback from players of Priston Tale, which has about 4,000 to 6,000 concurrent players in a day. An avatar will soon be created based on her character. She will also be available for online chats within the game soon, the game publisher said.

According to the International Data Corp., Philippine online gaming revenues were predicted to hit $13.4 million in 2005, an almost 50-percent increase from last year's $9 million.

The number of Philippine online gamers was anticipated to hit four million in 2005, a 33.9 percent increase from 2004.

IDC said that with its increasing popularity and the interest in online gaming, the Philippine online gaming industry is emerging as Southeast Asia's powerhouse.

The research firm pointed out that despite poor infrastructure support and service quality, piracy, foreseeable government regulation, and game genre saturation, the country's online gaming industry remains poised to evolve into a mature and consolidated, albeit price-conscious market.

IDC Philippines added that the popularity of massively multiplayer online role-playing games, the prevalence of Internet cafés, and the prepaid online gaming subscription model, were among the key factors that have contributed to the market's growth over the past two years.

IDC also showed that Filipino online gamers are usually quick to learn, are Internet-savvy, community-oriented, content-focused and updated on developments in online gaming.

Symptoms of system attacks

By Jerry Liao

POWERTIPS

1) Unusual amount of hard disk activity.

2) Unusual amount of network and website traffic.

3) Abnormal amount of Internet activity.

4) Missing or changed files on hard disk.

Announcement: Everyone is invited to attend the Powertips Security Secrets and Strategies conference on March 16, 2006 at Dusit Hotel Nikko. Tickets are available at all SM TicketNet outlets or call 911-5555. Register online at www.infochat.com.ph.

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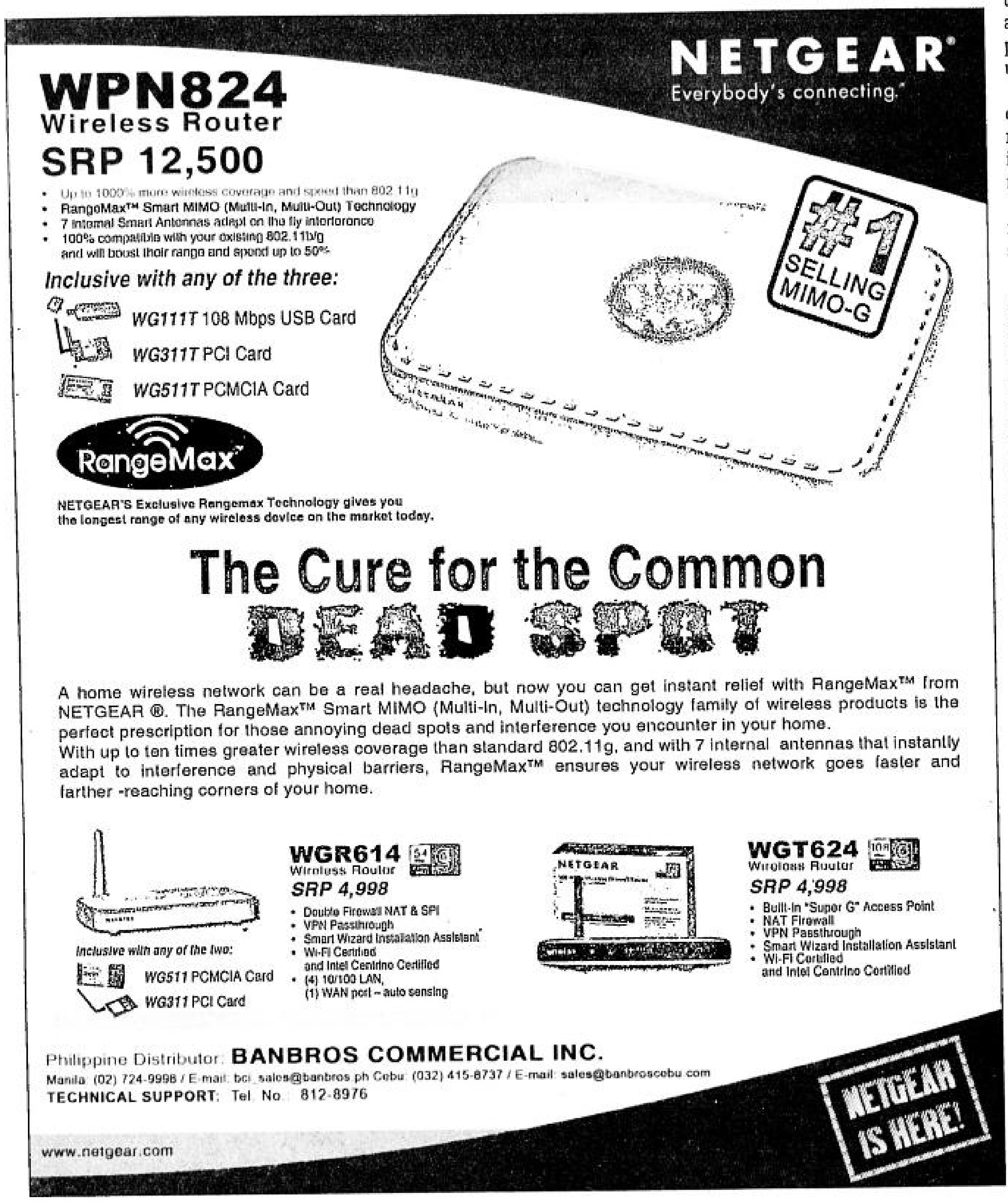

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Tesda, Transco to put up skills center

By Abigail L. Ho

IN PREPARATION for its expansion, and with the hope of reducing costs as well, the National Transmission Corp. has teamed up with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority to put up a licensed transmission linemen's skills assessment center.

The assessment center is located at Transco's Bayombong substation in Nueva Vizcaya.

Following the signing of a memorandum of agreement between Tesda and Transco, the operators of the assessment center are authorized to conduct competency assessment tests, measuring skills, knowledge and attitude based on an occupational skills standard for a transmission lineman.

Transco president and chief executive Alan Ortiz said that although the state firm has, for years, been operating a training center within the Bayombong substation, this partnership would enable it to share resources with Tesda.

Under the agreement, Transco and Tesda will share their resources, including facilities and technical personnel, to train transmission linemen, assess and certify their skills.

Transco Luzon operation and maintenance vice president Guillermo Redoblado said the increasing length of transmission lines, as well as the growing number of ongoing and planned projects nationwide, called for more highly skilled and duly certified linemen.

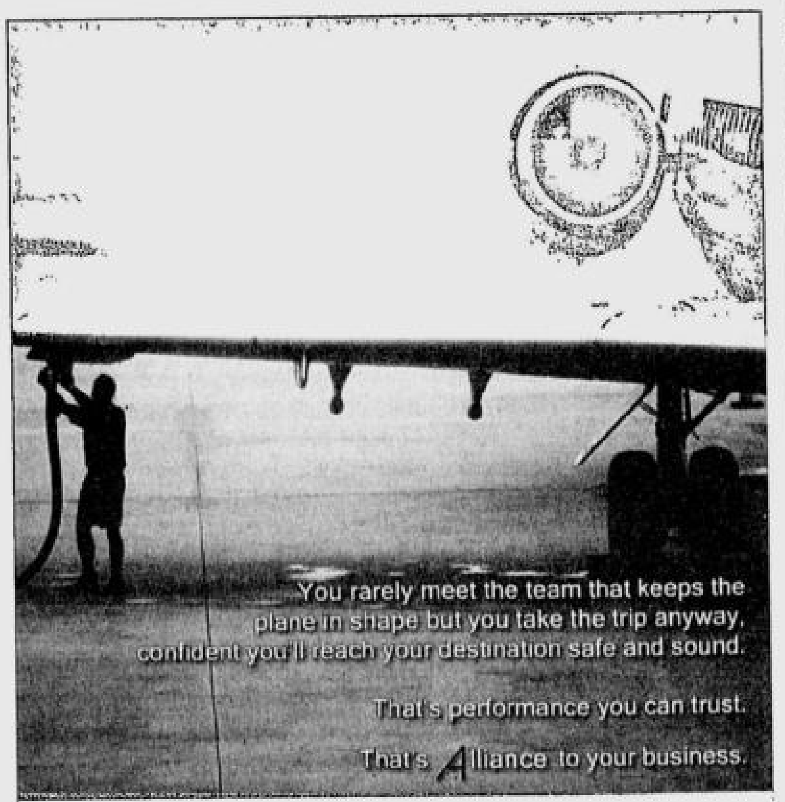
Tesda provincial director Manuel Hiadan said the establishment of the training and skills assessment center would help ease the unemployment problem in the Cagayan Valley region, as well as enhance economic growth and promote technology acquisition and transfer in the area.

The establishment of the new center has, in fact, already yielded benefits for Transco in the form of P187,000 in savings for one small project.

Transco recently energized a new 50-megavolt-ampere transformer in its Santiago substation in Isabela, which improved voltage regulation along the Santiago-Cauayan-Ilagan 69-kilovolt transmission line.

With the new transformer, customers of Isabela Electric Cooperatives I and II in 34 municipalities, and three cities in Isabela, have been assured of reliable power service.

The P187,000 in savings came from Transco's utilization of its own maintenance and transmission line personnel for the project in Cagayan Valley instead of hiring outsiders.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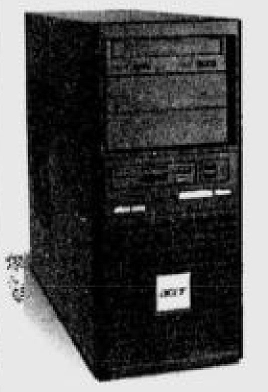

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This February, Acer becomes the first computer brand in the Philippines to offer a full range of servers featuring the new **Intel® Pentium® D processor 830 with dual core processing technology** and introduces four (4) new server models as part of its effort to allow offices to experience a revolutionary way of maintaining service excellence, and be able to move ahead of the pack.

Among latest set of servers now being offered at exciting price packages are the **Acer Altos G320,** equipped with **Intel® Pentium® D Processor 830 with Dual Core processor** capability, 1GB DDR2 533 unbuffered ECC RAM, 200 SATA hard drive and up to 3.0 GHz / 2MB L2 Cache and 800 MHz FSB, offered at **69,900 (SRP)**; another good option is the Acer Altos G320 with Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 631 supporting Hyper-Threading Technology at 59,900 (SRP); the **Acer Altos G520N**, which boasts of Dual Intel® Xeon® Processor (3.0 GHZ / 2MB L2 Cache and 800 MHz FSB), Intel® Extended Memory 64-bit Technology and 1GB DDR 333 Registered ECC RAM at **108,800 (SRP)**; and the **Acer Altos G520H**, which uses the same Dual Intel® Xeon® processor (3.0 GHZ / 2MB L2 Cache and 800 MHz FSB), Intel Extended Memory 64-bit Technology, and 1GB DDR 333 Registered ECC RAM (8GB max) with hotswappable and redundant power supply at **125,900 (SRP)**

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These latest edition servers from Acer may eventually be considered the ultimate office tool that can provide a solution for today's overburdened IT organizations and individuals -- each of whom have their own specific workgroup requirements and storage needs.

For inquiries about Acer and the other product lines it carries, call **Axis Distribution, Inc. at 637-9991 or MSI-ECS Philippines, Inc at 688-3333** or any visit authorized Acer Corporate Partners and Acer Retail and Valued Partners nationwide Interested parties can also check out **www.acer.com.ph.**

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- Integrated dual SATA ports
- Integrated Intel® Gigabit LAN
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[illegible]

Our meddlesome bishops again

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONference of the Philippines addressed "A Statement on Mining Issues and Concerns" to the "Sisters and Brothers in Christ." The CBCP is not the Magisterium. The statement is not a doctrine. The faithful may ignore the statement without fear of eternal damnation.

The bishops want the 1995 Mining Act repealed. Lawyers, engineers, metallurgists, environmentalists and legislators took nine long years (the same length of time it took the Magisterium to write the new Catechism) to craft and enact this law. Why didn't the bishops meddle then?

If the law is repealed (the bishops propose no replacement law), the implementing rules will have to be written off. All mining claims will be mere scraps of paper. Since it will have nothing to do, the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences will have to close, throwing its employees out of work. The landmark decision of the Supreme Court declaring the law constitutional will be worthless. There will be total chaos.

The bishops want the President to stop all large-scale mining, recall approved mining concessions and disapprove pending applications. The bishops want to throw one million people out of work, and dislocate nine million dependent on the mining industry. What a way for the bishops to tend to their flock.

The bishops say large-scale mining has not eased poverty. Mining used to account for 25 percent of the gross domestic product. That figure is down to one and a half percent. If mining has not eased poverty, it is because there is not enough mining being done.

The bishops display an inordinate fear of foreign domination of large-scale mining. Indeed, foreigners are allowed to hold the majority shares in the corporation, but the Filipino people get the majority share of the profits. Also, would large-scale mining, with all its supposed evils, be acceptable to the bishops if Filipinos were to dominate it?

The bishops cry their hearts out for the indigenous peoples driven out of their ancestral lands. But the Mines Bureau says no tribe has ever been driven off by large-scale mining. By the way, the Supreme Court has affirmed the tenet that the entire Filipino people, not just any community, own the mineral resources all over the country.

The main concern is environmental damage. The incident at Marcopper in Marinduque is the most celebrated. A thorough investigation by the US Geological Service puts engineering error as the cause of the spill of tailings into the river. But nobody died or even got sick. Marcopper paid US$50 million in escrow to the provincial government. The money has not been spent. Politicians are still squabbling over who gets what.

Insurance against environmental damage is now available. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Insurance Commission and the insurance industry are formulating rules on mandatory coverage. The private and public sectors prefer to manage the risks. The bishops prefer to turn their backs on them.

Mining, especially large-scale mining, is inherently dangerous. When you dig a big hole deep into the earth, you never know what forces you might unleash. When you blast a mountainside with TNT, accidents will happen. But the loss of life is nothing compared to the 6,000 Filipinos dying from road accidents every year.

The bishops give their blessings on small-scale mining. But small-scale mining poses greater danger to life and property. The mercury used pollutes everything. It pollutes the ground, then the grasslands on which livestock graze. It pollutes rivers and creeks. There is no antidote to drinking lethal mercury-polluted water.

The recent accident at Diwalwal clearly proves the great danger to life posed by small-scale mining.

Small-scale mining is extremely wasteful. No more than 40 percent of the gold (none of the copper) is extracted. Large-scale miners extract as much as 98 percent of the gold and the copper. There must be something the bishops can find in the Bible against such wastage of mineral resources God has generously showered upon us.

May the Holy Spirit shine upon our meddlesome bishops so they can dig deep into the mining act, the implementing rules, and the Supreme Court decision with utmost discernment and circumspection.

Wellex seeks strategic partner

Reorganizing operations, going into new ventures

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TO HELP REVIVE ITS DORMANT plastics operations, listed firm Wellex Industries Inc. of "plastics king" William Gatchalian is scouting for a strategic partner who will buy at least 30 percent of one of its subsidiaries.

Wellex Industries president Elvira A. Ting said after a recent company stockholder's meeting that Wellex was in preliminary talks with a China-based plastics manufacturer and a local firm engaged in consumer products manufacturing.

Ting said these companies are interested in acquiring 30- to 40-percent stake in Pacific Plastic Corp., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Wellex holding firm Plastic City Industrial Corp.

Wellex earlier invested P2.5 billion in Plastics City, its 30-hectare manufacturing complex in Valenzuela.

Beset by labor problems and stiff competition from imported products, manufacturing plants at the Plastic City ceased commercial operations in 2002.

GATCHALIAN

Wellex is now focusing on reorganizing its operations in preparation for new businesses.

In its financial report last September, Wellex said it had been incurring losses for the past three years. Deficit stood at P1.3 billion as of December 2004.

Wellex plans to continue operating.

Wellex has leased out its warehouse facilities in Plastic City to major companies.

Plastic City Industrial Corp., the holding firm of the Wellex Group, is the country's first fully integrated manufacturer of plastic products.

Robinsons Land posts 34% jump in profit

ROBINSONS LAND CORP. OF the Gokongweis said its net income jumped 34 percent to P1.2 billion in its last fiscal year ending September 2005 from P920.7 million in the previous year.

In its financial report submitted to the Philippine Stock Exchange, RLC said gross revenue rose 9 percent to P5.1 billion in fiscal year 2005 from P4.7 billion in fiscal year 2004.

RLC's commercial centers division pitched in 61 percent or P3.1 billion to the company's gross revenue. This represents a 10.7-percent increase from the previous year's P2.8 billion.

Driving the growth in this segment is rentals improvement in malls in Galleria, Manila, Bacolod, Metro East, Lipa in Batangas and Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Take-up was also strong in its new malls and the redeveloped Pioneer-Mandaluyong mall.

The company's high rise buildings unit booked gross revenue of P1.07 billion, up by 6 percent from P1.01 billion in the previous year. This was attributed to the substantial revenue contribution of "Bloomfields," a residential subdivision in Novaliches, Quezon City.

The division also enjoys stable recurring lease income from three of its office buildings—Galleria Corporate Center, Robinsons Equitable Tower and Robinsons Summit Center.

Rental income from these three buildings reached P220.7 million, or 6 percent higher than the year-ago level.

The hotels division registered gross revenue of P499.8 million, which was lower than the previous year's P521.6 million.

The company also reported average hotel occupancy rates of 72 percent for Holiday Inn Galleria Manila (HIGM), 80 percent for Cebu Midtown Hotel and 63 percent for Robinsons Apartelle.

The housing and land development division reported a 13-percent rise in gross revenue to P448.1 million as of the end of September 2005 from P395.1 million in the same period the previous year. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

iBank plans to raise ₱3B via tier 2 capital issuance

By Doris C. Dumlao

MEDIUM-SIZED INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE Bank plans to raise P2-P3 billion in tier 2 or supplementary capital in preparation to a more stringent accounting and capital adequacy rules.

iBank's tier 2 capital issuance was approved by the Monetary Board, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' policy-making body, in its meeting last week, BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla said Friday night.

Espenilla said the bank would issue financial instruments that would qualify as "lower" tier 2 capital.

Banking sources said the tier 2 fund-raising would be done through the issuance of redeemable preferred shares.

Deutsche Bank was mandated to underwrite the tier 2 offering. Sources said the exercise would likely start within the month.

Under the new risk-based capital adequacy framework adopted by the BSP, qualifying capital consists of tier 1 or core capital and tier 2 or supplementary capital less deductions.

Under the guidelines, lower tier 2 capital can be in any of the following forms:

- Paid-up limited life redeemable preferred stock without the replacement requirement upon redemption provided it shall be subject to a cumulative discount factor of 20 percent per year during the last five years to maturity.
- Limited life redeemable preferred stock without the replacement requirement upon redemption dividends distributable.
- Unsecured subordinated debt with a minimum original maturity of at least five years.

The BSP's tier 2 guidelines implement the recommendations of the Bank for International Settlements' Basel Committee, the international standard-setting body for banks.

While banks across the region are cleaning up the bad assets that piled up since the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, regulators are fine-tuning their regulatory and supervisory practices in line with BIS standards.

In the Philippines, tougher risk management guidelines have compelled many banks to issue tier 2 instruments and consider other long-term debt instruments, including hybrid debt instruments that could qualify as tier 1 capital.

For its part, iBank is now the biggest bank organized after the banking sector was liberalized and was now even bigger than many of the older banks.

Oil company putting up autogas stations

By Abigail L. Ho

THE VOLATILITY OF GASOLINE AND DIESEL prices in the international market has prompted Eastern Petroleum Corp. to earmark the bulk of its two-year capital expenditure budget amounting to P500 million for the establishment of stations that offer autogas or liquefied petroleum gas for vehicles.

Eastern Petroleum president Fernando Martinez said the oil firm wanted to start offering autogas as soon as possible as world fuel prices remained very unstable.

"We're more bent on autogas because we see flat growth on liquid fuels due to uncertain international prices. They (world fuel prices) appeared to have stabilized in December, but they're now very unstable again. Autogas is where we see growth," he told the INQUIRER.

He said the oil firm already had firm orders for autogas-related equipment. It had likewise started forging linkages with conversion kit providers.

At this point, however, he said the oil firm was still awaiting the issuance of guidelines governing the establishment of autogas stations.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Monday, February.6, 2006

ALL NEW SEASON
THE APPRENTICE
MONDAY 10PM
SEE IT FIRST ON
ABC
ALL NEW SERIES
APPRENTICE
Martha Stewart
TUESDAY 10PM

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	[illegible]	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ABC 5			Winner TV Shopping		Speed		TNA impact		Senro	Friends	Guinness Book Of Record		Fear Factor		Big News	The Apprentice		Teleo TV	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Little Amy	Mr Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Gulong Ng Palad	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Only You	Vietnam Rose	Forbidden Love	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
AXN		Las Vegas		Las Vegas		Las Vegas						Blue Streak				CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4)	
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dexter's Laboratory	Powerpuff Girls	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Codename Kids Next Door		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy		Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers	Battle B-Daman	Energy Bomb	X-Men Evolution	Samurai Jack	Justice League	Static Shock	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers
Cinema One		Ang Siga At Ang Sosyal				Forever My Love				Mahal Kita Walang Iwanan				Dahas				Yakapin Mo Ang Umaga	
Cinemax					Murder In Paradise			Keeper Of The City (6:15 PM)				City Of Angels				Trucks (9:50 PM)			Running Against Time
CNN				Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Black Hole High	So Little Time	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pro Billiards '04 BCA Open 9-Ball C'ships Fin		World Pool Masters '01		Winter X Games Classic		Extreme Programming Sports Mania		In The Driver's Seat	Sportscenter Asia	Sportscenter Asia	NFL Superbowl XL Seahawks Vs. Steelers						Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Project Runway		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Project Runway		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		ET Weekend		Joan Of Arcadia	
EWTN	Benediction And Devotion Encore	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Voices On Virtue	EWTN Gallery	The Catholic Faith & Vatican II	Sunday Night With (Encore) Fr. Benedict Groeschel		Threshold Of Hope		Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15 PM)	Defending Life	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Fox Report Sunday		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends				Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	Date With Tiffany		Dragonball Z	Slam Dunk	Frog Prince	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Sugo	Etheria	Starstruck 3	Jewel In The Palace/Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi		
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Doc Martin		A Christmas Carol: The Musical			Who's The Boss? II	Bewitched	The Nanny	Strong Medicine		Judging Amy		Royal Scandal			McLeod's Daughters IV (10:35 PM)		Strong Medicine (11:25 PM)
HBO			Death Wish 4: The Crackdown			Neil Simon's The Goodbye Girl				Hellboy				Eurotrip			Absolute Power		
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Krusada Kontra Krimen		TBA						Global Family Series	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Bottomline		Afterburn		X-Men Evolution	Beat The Geeks	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box			
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	Ultimate Hollywood Blonde		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Living Spaces	Style Star	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
MTV Philippines	Rockola	MTV Ask	Chart Attack		Viva La Bam	Pop Inc.		MTV Hits			Aeon Flux	Massive	Get Spotted	TRL		The 70's House	Wild N' Out	Homecoming	Vint Video Collections
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	MYX Finds	Star MYX	MYXLOG	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten			Mobile MYX Top Picks	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic	Wild Family Secrets	Hidden Worlds		Dangerous Encounters		Wildlife Diary	Totally Wild	Top 5 - Mysterious Universe		Wow!		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Treasure Fleet: The Adventures Of Zheng He		Hornets, A Sting In The Tale	
NBN		Value Vision		Value Vision		Teledyaryo	Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Ting ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo				Dial M		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	My Life As A Teenage Robot	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron			All That	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	Drake & Josh	The Fairly Odd Parents	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Chalkzone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	The Brothers Garcia
PBO			Tunay Na Kaibigan, Walang Iwanan				Ukdahan Si Ka Oca				Jack En Jill				Jessica Alfaro Story				Working Girls
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Striker Hungry Heart	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Love At Aegean Sea	Hotelier	All In	Laugh To Laugh Ang Kulit	H3O Hahaha Over!		News On Q	Ugat Ng Kababaihan		MINT (Music Interactive)	
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	As Told By Ginger	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Scare Tactics	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Simple Life 2	Cerge For Truth	
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		SBN Music Video			
Solar Sports		2006 Adelaide Open SF1 Serra vs. Hibuty			GWS 03-2006	Greatest Classics				Sagupaan		NBA Game Jazz @ Kings					Sportsdesk	Denmark Open Wmn's Singles SF	
Sports Plus		PAC 10 Basketball: Washington @ UCLA				Ultimate Fighting Championship		Superbowl XL Detroit, Michigan											
Star Movies	America's Prince: The John F. Kennedy Jr. Story			A Life Less Ordinary			Dying Young (5:45 PM)				Wrong Turn (7:35 PM)			The Forsaken			The Hurricane (10:35 PM)		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Angel		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Friends (Series 10)	My Wife And Kids	Everybody Loves Raymond	Frasier (Series 0)		Monk (Series 4)		Friends (Series 10)	My Wife And Kids
Studio 23		Yugioh Duel Monster						Get Backers	Spirits	Wazzup Wazzup	The Swan Season 2		Charmed (8:20 PM)	Lost (9:10 PM)		News Central	The West Wing		Travel Time

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Debt-to-GDP ratio seen to hit 74%

RP debt standing expected to improve over the next 5 years

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S debt as a percentage of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to register its first drop this year after posting consecutive increases over the last four years.

According to the 2006 fiscal program prepared by the Department of Finance, the government's debt-to-GDP ratio would go down to 74.1 percent this year, and would continually drop until it improves to 51 percent by 2010.

The expected drop in the debt-to-GDP ratio—one of the economic indicators closely watched by investors and credit rating agencies—is said to be brought about by the government's revenue-raising measures. The measures are seen to improve the government's fiscal standing.

The expected debt-to-GDP ratio of 74.1 percent for this year takes into account the projected debt of P4.4 trillion and a nominal GDP of close to P6 trillion.

The debt-to-GDP ratio measures how fast the government's debt increases or decreases relative to the growth of the economy.

A declining ratio means either that the growth in government debt is decelerating or that the economy's growth is accelerating.

Historical data showed that the debt-to-GDP ratio stood at 64.9 percent in 2001 and had continually grown to 71.1 percent in 2002, 78 percent in 2003 and 78.8 percent in 2004.

In 2005, the ratio was programmed to stand at an even higher figure of 79.8 percent.

The growth in the debt-to-GDP ratio was blamed on the huge deficits that had forced the government into enormous borrowings over the years.

Finance officials attribute the expected decline in the debt-to-GDP ratio this year to improving revenues resulting from various measures, such as the two-percentage-point increase in the value-added tax rate. Higher revenues, they said, would cut the government's deficit and therefore reduce the need for borrowings.

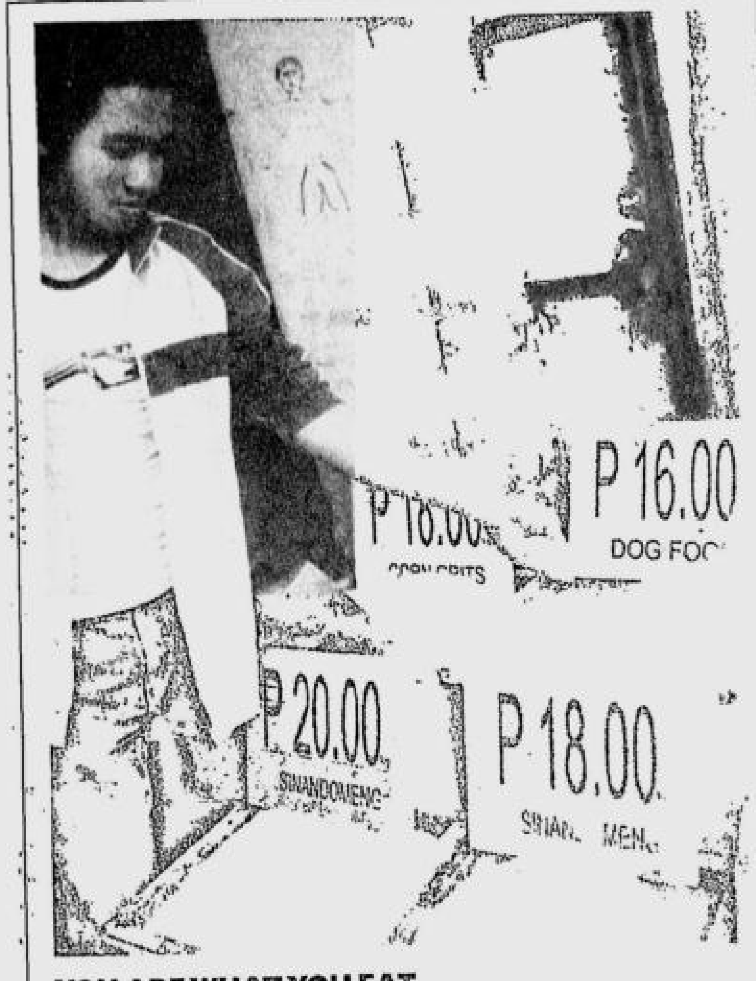
Although the expected actual debt figure of P4.4 trillion this year still reflects an increase—debt was estimated to have stood at P4.2 trillion last year—the growth is seen to be slower than the expected growth in the economy.

Debt would only decrease once the government totally plugs its budget deficit, which is estimated to be trimmed down to P124.9 billion this year from last year's 146.5 billion.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves earlier said the DOF would focus its efforts this year to monitoring the performance of the recently implemented fiscal reform measures to ensure they generate the expected revenues.

Teves said the DOF believed that the improving fiscal condition would create a positive pressure on the country's credit rating. However, he admitted that it is still uncertain whether the credit-rating agencies will actually improve their outlook on the Philippines this year.

The three major ratings firms—Standard & Poor's, Fitch Ratings, and Moody's Investors Service—have all submitted "negative" ratings on the country's credit standing.



YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT
The country hasn't gone to the dogs—at least not yet. The rice dealer, probably stricken with a sick sense of humor, has gone on to sell grain fit for man's best friend, alongside staples for human consumption, in a city where dogs happen to be a sought-after meal. VINCENT CABREZA

'05 earnings from IT services hit ₱1.8B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EARNINGS FROM INFORMATION technology-enabled services (ITES) reached a total of $1.8 billion in 2005—about 33 percent higher than the $1.2 billion posted the previous year—as the country continues to reap benefits from offshore businesses, according to an industry research firm.

Lauro Vives, global managing partner of Canada-based XMG Inc., said the figures could even go up to as high as $2.3 billion, an increase of 28 percent, by the end of this year.

Based in Victoria, British Columbia, XMG also provides advising and consulting services.

Vives said that although the figures were encouraging, ITES providers would be wise to reposition their businesses amid a trend of "backsourcing"—a situation where business owners would want to provide the services themselves, instead of turning to other firms for help.

"There is definitely a move toward backsourcing," Vives said. "According to studies, 90 percent of corporate chief information officers were thinking of setting up their own outfits rather than continue to tap outside help."

Vives said 34 percent of CIOs considered this idea in 2004 and only 3.5 percent in 2003.

"Just recently, GM of Australia terminated its contract with EDS, and I think this proves that there is such a trend," he said.

But according to Vives, the Philippines' ITES sector would not be adversely affected by this trend.

Vives said that with heightened awareness of the capabilities of Asia-Pacific countries and the increasing internal tolerance for risks in operating offshore, several international organizations that have previously outsourced multi-year contracts with overseas operators would set up their own outfits abroad to meet internal business process and IT needs.

To address this development, Vives said XMG on Tuesday will launch its Information and Communication Technology Executive Forum for IT decision makers.

"We believe CIOs would rise in prominence, along with chief finance officers and other key company officers," he said. "The Forum is aimed at advancing the management expertise and business best practices in ICT."

The forum would provide members access to executive briefings on the latest insights concerning the industry; roundtable discussions and access to XMG's researches, as well as one-on-one consultations with analysts.

RP food producers want access to EU market anew

By Christine A. Gaylican

OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF tuna canneries in General Santos City are seeking new accreditation from the European Commission after members of the European Union (EU) recently tightened safety regulations on imported food products.

EU is the country's second largest destination for tuna exports. Trade figures are pegged at no less than $200 million a year.

According to Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban, tuna manufacturers have continuously been upgrading their facilities in time for the inspection of EU authorities in March.

"We cannot afford to lose the EU market," said Panganiban. "Local tuna canneries are gearing up to maintain their accreditation."

Two European experts will arrive in the country to study the quality and competitiveness of Philippine fishery facilities and aquaculture products.

The EC has lowered the acceptable lead content of tuna products they are importing to 0.2 from 0.5 parts per million and has been strictly monitoring the application of Good Agricultural Practices of Philippine exporters.

Tuna is still one of the country's top marine and aquaculture exports in recent years. The Philippines is the second biggest producer of tuna, next to Taiwan, with an annual net of 300,000 metric tons valued at more than P18 billion, and foreign exchange earnings of P11 billion, according to data gathered from the Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry.

Recently, the EC has also decided to reduce in April the tariff on Asean tuna exports. The tariff reduction will significantly increase Philippine exports to the EU market by 8 to 12 percent.

As aid to tsunami affected nations, the EU Council of Member States has decided to advance by three months the date of implementation of its new tariff lines on imported canned and pouched tuna from Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia.

Buencamino said that although the Philippines was the least affected by the tsunami tragedy, it stands to benefit from the EC's decision.

"The Philippine tuna industry will get a boost following the lowering of tax rates imposed by the EU on non-preferred countries beginning in April instead of July," Buencamino said.

From 24 percent, the EU Council of Member States lowered the tariff to 12 percent. The new tariff line will be applied over a period of three years.

Tuna products in aluminum foil pouches have become increasingly popular in Europe because the packaging preserves the fresh taste and firm texture of the fish better than those packaged in tin cans.

Globe's non-stop offer turns into a permanent fixture

By Clarissa S. Batino

STARTING TOMORROW, FEB. 7, SUBSCRIBERS of Globe Telecom Inc. may send and receive unlimited text messages after the National Telecommunications Commission approved the carrier's Txt Nonstop offering.

Txt Nonstop is open to Globe's 13 million prepaid and postpaid customers since September.

Txt Nonstop allows unlimited texting within the network for P15 for a day, P25 for 2 days and P50 for 5 days.

Globe said that on the average, subscribers availing themselves of the promo send 25 to 27 messages a day.

For the P15 a day Txt Nonstop, Globe said it collects only 58 centavos for each message. Globe's revenue falls to 49 centavos for each message sent under the P25 Txt Nonstop, and it goes even lower to 37 centavos a message sent under the P50 Txt Nonstop.

"The commission poses no objection (to giving its permanent approval), subject to the condition that Globe shall publish the mechanics in the newspapers," said the NTC.

Text messaging has become the most popular and most affordable way to communicate. More than 30 million Filipinos who own mobile phones send more than 400 million messages a day for P1 or less with each message sent.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LEONCIA SANTOS has been extrajudicially settled among her heirs before Notary Public PANCHO G. UMALI of Makati City as per Doc. No.108, Page No.23, Book No.V, Series of 2005.
(PDI-Jan. 23, 30 & Feb. 6, 2006)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ENCARNACION D. VARONA was extrajudicially settled among heirs with quit claim/waiver of rights as per Doc. No. 123 Page No. 29 Book I Series of 2006 before Notary Public Erlinda C. Reyes of Antipolo City.
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Butuan City Water District hereby invites suppliers and distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid, in accordance with I.R.R. of R.A. 9184, for the supply and delivery of Brass Fittings, C.I. Combination Flange, C.I. Valves & Fittings, G.I. Pipes & Fittings and HDPE Pipes.

PACKAGE 1. BRASS FITTINGS, ISO (4 Items)

Qty.	Description
2,048 Pcs.	Angle Meter Valve 25mmØ x 25mmØ
3,706 Pcs.	Coupling 25mmØ
1,019 Pcs.	Coupling 32mmØ
1,763 Pcs.	Union 25mmØ

ABC: Php 1,400,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,500.00

PACKAGE 2. C.I. COMBINATION FLANGE, ISO (5 Items)
6 Pcs. 110mmØ; 5 pcs. 160mmØ; 10 Pcs. 25mmØ
10 Pcs. 280mmØ; 10 Pcs. 315mmØ
ABC: Php 600,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,000.00

PACKAGE 3. C.I. VALVES & FITTINGS (8 Items)
6 Pcs. Air Release Valve 50mmØ
1 Pc. Check Valve, 225mmØ F/F BNG
2 Pcs. Gate Valve, 100mmØ F/F BNG NRS
2 Pcs. Hydrant Head, 100mmØ Residential
2 Pcs. Mechanical Wye 225mmØ x 225mmØ
SPLIT TEE (3 Items) 10 Pcs. 160mmØ x 110mmØ;
11 Pcs. 225mmØ x 110mmØ;
11 Pcs. 225mmØ x 160mmØ
ABC: Php 700,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,000.00

PACKAGE 4. G.I. PIPES SCH. 40 & G.I. FITTINGS (7 Items)
216 Pcs. Pipe 1"Ø x 6m; 866 Pcs. Bushing Reducer 1"Ø x ¾" Ø; 2,049 Pcs. Elbow 1"Ø x 90°;
8,500 Pcs. Plug ¾" Ø; 4,520 Pcs. Tee Reducer 1"Ø x ¾" Ø; 2,560 Pcs. Tee 1"Ø x 1"Ø;
1,640 Pcs. Union 1"Ø
ABC: Php 593,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 1,000.00

PACKAGE 5. Black HDPE PIPES, 25mmØ; 32mmØ & Blue HOPE PIPES 110mmØ, SDR 11, ISO (3 Items)
297 Rolls 25mmØ x 150m; 190 Rolls 32mmØ x 90m;
1,066 Pcs. 110mmØ x 6m
ABC: Php 3,720,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 2,000.00

PACKAGE 6. Blue HDPE PIPES, 225mØ, 280mmØ & 315mmØ, SDR 11, ISO (3 Items)
1,221 Pcs. 225mmØ x 6m; 10 Pcs. 280mmØ x 6m;
10 Pcs. 315mmØ x 6m
ABC: Php 11,730,000.00 Bidding Fee: Php 3,000.00

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased per package by interested Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee as indicated per package. The method of payment is CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidders or his authorized representative.

For Package 5, interested applicants shall submit to the BAC Secretariat, during its business hours, one (1) roll 25mmØ x 150m and one (1) roll 32mmØ x 90m HDPE Pipes as samples, which shall be subjected to Hydro testing on Working & Bursting Pressure and Measurement Tests. Deadline for submission of samples shall be on February 20, 2006. Only applicants duly notified that their samples passed the test are qualified to purchase bidding documents and participate in the bidding.

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the Training Hall of BCWD Admin. Building on the following dates:

February 22, 2006	9:00 A.M. – Packages 1 & 4 2:00 P.M – Packages 2 & 3
March 1, 2006	9:00 A.M. – Packages 5 & 6

Submission and opening of sealed bids shall be at the same venue, which shall follow on:

March 6, 2006	9:00 A.M. – Packages 1 & 4 2:00 P.M. – Packages 2 & 3
March 13, 2006	9:00 A.M – Packages 5 & 6\

Butuan City Water District reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or formality therein, to assume no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of their bids, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) JORGE L. GUDUYO, C.E.
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – February 6 & 13, 2006)

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FPA Board Resolution No. 05
Series of 2005

WHEREAS, the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) is a regulatory agency created by Presidential Decree (PD) 1144, an agency attached to the Department of Agriculture:

WHEREAS, the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority is mandated by law to regulate, control and develop both the fertilizer and pesticide industry that include the licensing of all handlers and the registration of all fertilizer and pesticide products that are intended to be imported, exported, manufactured, formulated, stored, distributed, sold or offered for sale, transported, delivered for transportation or used in the country;

WHEREAS, the Ozone Layer is a thin, fragile shield that effectively filters and screens almost all of the harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun and the ozone hole is the result of the thinning of the ozone layer due to depletion of the ozone layer caused by ozone depleting substances (ODS) that include methyl bromide, a fumigant used for the control of nematodes, fungi, weeds, pathogens and insect pests;

WHEREAS, the alarming rate of ozone depletion resulted to a global concern that led to an agreement called the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer binding signatories to discontinue production and consumption of ODS and set specific targets for their phase-out, which the Philippines signed on September 1988;

WHEREAS, in 1992, the Copenhagen Amendment to the Protocol included methyl bromide (MB) among the ODS and introduced control and phase-out schedule on its consumption. The amendment was ratified by the Philippine Senate on March 2001;

WHEREAS, in line with the commitment of the Philippine government as party to the Montreal Protocol, a National Methyl Bromide Phase-out Strategy was instituted and being implemented by the FPA which put in effect, among others, a 20% yearly reduction on controlled/non-exempt MB usage, that is MB use for soil sterilization in banana plantation, fumigation of grains and stored commodities in warehouses and storage facilities and structural fumigation that include flourmills, ships and aircrafts, started on 2005 up to 2008 until its eventual phase-out by 2009;

WHEREAS, to assist the FPA in the implementation of the Phase-out Strategy, a multi agency group composed of various government bureaus and agencies called the Methyl Bromide Technical Advisory Committee (MBTAC) was established as a consultative and recommendatory body to the FPA;

WHEREAS, the MBTAC after due deliberation and consultation, recommended to the FPA, the registration of Category I substitutes to Methyl Bromide in view of the use reduction and eventual phase-out of controlled/nonexempt MB use;

WHEREAS, in response to the decrease in usage and the eventual phase-out of MB use for controlled/non-exempt purposes, availability of substitutes to MB becomes a necessity and of crucial importance to the affected sectors since MB is a fumigant of choice for its effectivity, ease in application, short aeration period and economy;

WHEREAS, registration of substitutes to MB will not be legally possible since these chemical fumigants fall under Hazard Category I pesticides, and thus are subject to the prohibition under *FPA Pesticide Circular No. 03*, dated June 6, 1988 entitled, *"Moratorium on New Registration of Category I Pesticides"*;

NOW THEREFORE, upon motion duly seconded, the Board RESOLVES to ALLOW the registration of Category I substitutes to Methyl Bromide in line with the phase-out schedule as a country's commitment as a party to the Montreal Protocol.

This resolution shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in one (1) newspaper of general circulation.

Quezon City, Philippines, November 16, 2005

Approved by:

DOMINGO F. PANGANIBAN
Secretary of Agriculture and
Chairman of the Board, FPA

LEALYN A. RAMOS
Officer-in-Charge
Bureau of Plant Industry

PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary
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LOLIBETH R. MEDRANO
Director
Environmental Management Bureau

LETICIA BARBARA BAÑEZ- GUTIERREZ
Director
Bureau of Food and Drugs

(PDI – February 6, 2006)

The 'Subik' experience

THE GREATER SUBIC BAY Tourism Bureau (GSBTB), a forum composed of operators of diverse tourism-related business and non-government in Bataan, the city of Olongapo, the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, and Zambales, unveiled a major tourism project dubbed the "Subik! Subik! Festival" on February 10-12, 2006, which will showcase the country's rich cultural others.

The tourist attractions found in Bataan, Olongapo, Subic Bay Freeport and Zambales serve as a call not only to foreign tourists, but to the domestic markets as well – to come and see their country as a land in our natural surrounding and of our people makes this country a real WOW Philippines of the world.

With strong advocacy in place, the GSBTB seeks to bind all the tourist attractions found in Bataan, Olongapo, Subic Bay Freeport and Zambales in to a synergy characterized in one single identity- the spirit and soul of Subik. This eventually drives the bureau to develop and project, be proud of and promote our destinations, our people and culture to the world.

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"We at ABE constantly update our curriculum in tune with the latest developments in the industry. We are now offering Hotel and Restaurant Management and Tourism courses in recognition of the very progressive HRM and Tourism industries which are vital areas that could spur the country's economic growth," said vice president and chief operating officer Danter R. Sullivan.

He said that apart from teaching IT-based practical solutions to the problems besetting entrepreneurs, the school also offers alternative management and marketing programs to help would-be businessmen to cope with the challenges of the industry.

Other notable honors granted to ABE include the National Product Quality Excellence's most outstanding business college in 2005, the 2004-05 Philippine Marketing Excellence Award for most outstanding IT-based business college. Organized by powerhouses in the marketing industry such as the Asian Institute of Marketing and Entrepreneurship and Sales & Marketing magazine, the Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards is a yearly undertaking to recognize achievers/companies in the adoption of excellent marketing practices.

Advocates of entrepreneurship would be glad to know that ABE was certified as the no. 1 IT-based business college for 2005 by the National Shopper's Choice Awards, a distinguished consumer award-giving body. It was also recognized by the Parangal ng Bayan as the most outstanding business school for 2005.

ABE is a member of the prestigious AMA Education System (Amaes), Asia's pioneer and largest network of IT-based colleges and universities. Its distinct advantage lies in its modern computer facilities and technology supported by its international affiliates in education such as Microsoft, Cisco Systems, NCC-UK, Alpha Innovations and Festo.

Omega-3 fatty acids recommended for diabetics, high-risk heart patients

MANY PRACTICING PHYSICIANS are now prescribing supplementation with omega-3 fatty acids for patients classified as high-risk to develop heart attacks and strokes.

Since diabetics belong to this high-risk group and are in fact classified as a coronary heart disease (CHD) equivalent, leading medical experts in diabetes or diabetologists in the country are also now recommending the use of omega-3 for these patients. Patients with diabetes are considered CHD equivalent because they have a similar risk of developing a heart attack or other cardiovascular complications as patients with established heart disease or those who already had a previous heart attack.

Clinical evidences supporting the clinical benefits with omega-3 supplementation are now accumulating and are published in prestigious international journals. In a well received analysis of all well-designed clinical trials evaluating cholesterol-modulating drugs including statins and fibrates published in the Archives of Internal Medicine recently, omega-3 Pufa has been shown to have the most significant benefit in terms

of improving survival and lifespan of heart patients.

The role of omega-3 in preventing sudden death especially in those with irregular heart beats or arrhythmia is also mounting. Studies show that about half of all deaths from heart disease are sudden and unexpected, regardless of the underlying disease. This may be due to narrowing of the coronary arteries in patients with diabetes or cholesterol problems, degeneration of the heart muscle or to cardiac enlargement in patients with high blood pressure.

While deaths from coronary artery disease have fallen, mortality from sudden cardiac death remains the most common cause of death in many countries. Previous heart attack victims have a risk of sudden death which is four to six times the rate of the general population. The females are not necessarily the stronger sex in relation to sudden death. At older ages, women who have heart attacks are twice as likely as men to die from them within a few weeks.

To prevent sudden cardiac death, one must treat the underlying problems i.e. coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, diabetes, smoking and other risk factors.

Over the last 10 years, there is now convincing scientific data showing that omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids in fish oil may have a significant clinical application in the prevention of sudden cardiac death. Heart experts including the American Heart Association (AHA) have now recommended omega-3 in the prevention of heart attack, stroke and sudden cardiac death. It has been suggested that the decreased mortality associated with fish intake may be in part due to a reduction by omega-3 fatty acids of fatal arrhythmias leading to cardiac arrest.

Several clinical trials, including the highly acclaimed Gissi Prevenzione Trial published in the prestigious Lancet medical journal, have shown a consistent effect of omega-3 in reducing the incidence of sudden cardiac death. In the same trials, no significant cardiovascular benefits have been reported with vitamin E.

A locally available brand of omega-3 supplement is Omegabloc which is an over-the-counter food supplement in most Mercury and Watson drug stores nationwide. It comes in 1-gram softgels and is recommended at a dose of 2-3 softgel capsules daily. It is manufactured by a leading manufacturer of food supplements in the United States.

Trianon International, the local distributor of Omegabloc, is welcoming provincial distributors, according to Francis Melegrito, Trianon national sales manager. Interested parties can call 892-0723, 892-0724, 815-3239 or 813-5436.

DepED
Oral Care Package for a "Bright Child"

LAMOIYAN, DEPED ORIENTATION ON ORAL CARE

The joint undertaking on the implementation of the Oral Care Package for a Bright Child program further progresses as proponents Lamoiyan Corp's Hapee toothpaste and the Department of Education (DepEd) recently conducted the project orientation before DepEd representatives at the Richville Hotel in Mandaluyong City. Strategies on how to effectively integrate oral healthcare education in the elementary curriculum among other related efforts were formulated after the day-long seminar. Officials present were Lamoiyan managing consultant Ding Salvador and marketing services manager Anthony Ang, together with DepEd's Health Division-Health and Nutrition Center Chief Dr. Ma. Corazon Dumlao, and Dental Services Section Head Dr. Juan Araojo. The Oral Care Package for a Bright Child program is a 2-year partnership between Lamoiyan and DepEd. Lamoiyan will provide oral care products and dental facilities from its P2-million budget allocation for this advocacy. The campaign intends to decrease student absenteeism brought about by oral health problems. Shown (seated from left) are: Bing Tecson of Lamoiyan Corp; Director Adelfo Trinidad, DepED Consultant; Dr. Corazon C. Dumlao, Head Medical, DepEd; Ding Salvador, managing consultant, Lamoiyan Corp; Catherine R. Andres, program director, Professional Insights Marketing Services; Dr. Jun Arajo, Head Dental, DepEd; and Anthony Ang, marketing services manager, Lamoiyan Corp.

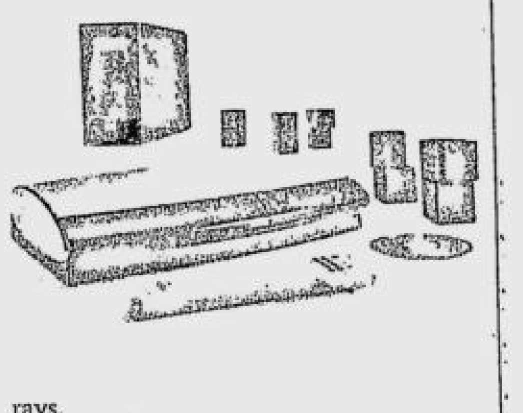
ProductFILES

Home theater system from Bose

THE BOSE LIFESTYLE 48 DVD HOME ENtertainment system will change the way you think about movies and music... even your CD collection. Digitally store and organize up to 340 hours of music in the media center, featuring a progressive scan DVD/CD player. The ADAPTiQ audio calibration system analyzes your room and adjusts your Lifestyle system's sound for great performance and cinematic experience.

One of the key elements of the Lifestyle 48 DVD system features the award-winning Jewel Cube speaker arrays-measuring only 4½ inches high-for dramatically lifelike sound. These are the smallest and most powerful speaker arrays of Bose, yet they deliver sound you would expect from speakers many times their size. The Jewel Cube speakers fill your room with wondrous surround sound.

At the heart of the Bose entertainment system is the Acoustimass module, which produces resounding low notes that bring action sequences to life and adds fullness to music. The Acoustimass module can be placed out of sight, so all the sound seems to come from the Jewel Cube speaker arrays.



The Lifestyle 48 DVD system puts it all together with innovative approaches that let you easily customize your listening experience. All with the performance, elegance and simplicity you expect from Bose.

For inquiries about Bose entertainment systems, call 898-2048, 634-8484 or visit its showrooms at the Rockwell Powerplant Mall, SM Megamall, SM City North Edsa, Festival Supermall, Robinsons Place Manila or log on to www.eleksis.com.

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory
Third Death Anniversary
JOSE S. ENEJOSA, JR.
of Mauban, Quezon & Pasig City
His wife EVELYN; children JOJO ( ), JEFFREY, JINKY ( ), JENNIFER & Rolando; grandchildren CHRISTOPHER, ALEXANDRIA and JR. request the pious readers to pray for his eternal repose.

Message of Thanks

We wish to express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those who offered prayers, flowers, cash donations and their condolences to us, as well as to those who share the love and concern we have for our beloved father,

GEORGE M. PEREZ

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 2, 2006.

From his children: **Dante**, **Wilhelmina** and **Tel**, and **Bong** and **Arleen**; and grandchildren **GT**, **Gretchen**, **Harone** and **Heirich**.

Our Dearly Beloved "Daddylo"
DR. ANTONIO OBIETA GISBERT
May 24, 1917 – February 06, 2005
In loving memory of his first death anniversary
his wife, **Agerica** & the whole family

Children: Menchie & Mac, Tess & Manny, Boy & Babylou, Jo & Jojo, Mylo & Ed, Johnny & Flora, Ramon & Jet, Victor & Arlene, Marissa, Rose & Lito, Ann & Gary, Marikit & Joel, Martin & Nancy.

Grandchildren : Maricel & Noel, Malou & Noel, Yazmin & Niño, April, Michael, T.J. & Day, Philip, Farah, Yancey & May, Justin, Celine & Patrick, Jay, Trixie, Mayday & Fred, John Rex & Mina, Maidess, Monji, Tonio, Katrina & Leo, Patricia, Tanya, Giles, Mona, Niña, Kurt, Burt, Sydney, Jonas, Francis, Toni, Coody, Marly

Great Grandchildren : Nico, Sandy, Nikki, Chelsea, Jean, Ri-an, Renzo, Az, Mikey, Bianca, Belle, Raphael, Marianne, Sophia

request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul

Masses will be offered at the following churches:

Basilica of the Immaculate Conception-*Intramuros, Manila*	7:30 am & 12 nn
Christ the King Parish- *E. Rodriguez, Q.C.*	6:30 am & 6 pm
Mary the Queen Parish-*Greenhills, San Juan*	6 am & 6 pm
Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz-*Binondo, Manila*	6 am & 5:30 pm
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene-*Quiapo, Manila*	6 am & 6 pm
National Shrine of the Sacred Heart- *Makati City*	6 am & 6 pm
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish-*Ermita, Manila*	6 am & 6 pm
Our Lady of Remedios Parish-*Malate, Manila*	6 am & 6 pm
Parish of Our Lady of The Abandoned-*Hulo, Mand. City*	6:30 am & 6 pm
Parish of Our Lady of the Abandoned-*Sta. Ana, Manila*	6:30 am & 6:30 pm
Parish of San Felipe Neri-*Mandaluyong*	6 am & 6 pm
Parish of Sto. Nino,*Pandacan, Manila*	6 am & 6 pm
Sacred Heart Parish-*Old Sta. Mesa Manila*	6 am & 6 pm
Saint Francis Parish Church-*Shaw, Mand. City*	6 am & 6 pm
San Agustin Church-*Intramuros, Manila*	5:30 pm
San Fernando de Dilao Parish-*Paco, Manila*	6:30 am & 6:30 pm
San Roque Parish-*Mandaluyong City*	6 am & 6 pm
San Sebastian Parish-*Quiapo, Manila*	6 am & 6 pm
Santissimo Rosario Parish-*UST, Sampaloc, Manila*	7:30 am & 5:15 pm
Santuario de San Antonio- *Forbes Park, Makati*	6:15 am & 6 pm
Santuario de San Jose-*Greenhills, Mand. City*	6:15 am & 6 pm
Santuario Del Sto. Cristo-*San Juan*	6 am
Shrine of the Most Holy Rosary-*Sto Domingo, Q.C.*	6 am & 6 pm
Shrine of the Divine Mercy-*Mand. City*	6 am & 6 pm
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish-*Magallanes*	6 am & 6 pm
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish-*Makati City*	6:30 am & 6:30 pm
St. Anthony's Shrine-*Sampaloc, Manila*	6:15 am & 6:30 pm
St. John Bosco Parish -*Makati City*	6 am & 6 pm
St. John the Baptist Parish-*Pinaglabanan, San Juan*	5:45 am & 6 pm
St. Joseph The Worker Parish-*Makati City*	6 am & 6 pm
St. Jude Archdiocesan Shrine-*Manila*	6 am
Sta. Cruz Parish-*Sta. Cruz, Manila*	8 am & 6:15 pm

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"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." - John 3:16

Surge in flour imports worries local millers

By Christine A. Gaylican

LOCAL FLOUR MILLERS HAVE CALLED ON concerned government agencies, such as the Bureau of Customs and the health department's Bureau of Food and Drugs, to investigate the surge in the supply of imported substandard flour in the domestic market.

The Philippine Association of Flour Millers Inc. (Pafmil) said sub standard flour, largely from China, was flooding the domestic market and distorting local prices. The imported flour, it said, was being sold at prices P30 to P50 per bag lower than those of locally produced flour.

Pafmil executive director Ric Pina said flour imports jumped 114 percent last year to 30,000 metric tons from 14,000 metric tons in 2004.

"The bigger concern is that flour imports are not fortified with vitamins A and iron as required by Republic Act (RA) 8976," Pinca said in an interview.

While local flour millers are prohibited from selling unfortified flour, the imports are being freely sold even if they do not meet the fortification requirement.

Pinca said the influx of cheap, sub-standard imported flour was expected to affect the viability of local flour millers in the long term.

"We don't mind competition for as long as they fight on equal grounds," he added.

There are 11 flour milling companies in the country. The top five are San Miguel Corp., Philippine Foremost Flour Mills, Pilmico Foods Corp., Universal Robina Corp. and General Milling Corp.

Globe proposes 83% cut in access charges

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE TELECOM INC. IS PROPOSING A REduction by as much as 83 percent in the interconnection or access fees that telecom companies charge each other to further reduce the cost of domestic and overseas calls in the country.

The joint venture of Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom said it was putting on the table "a genuine tender" to lower phone rates. The offer, it said, was far more superior than what Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. had offered.

In a letter to the National Telecommunications Commission, Globe said it was willing to reduce the interconnection or access charges it was charging other phone companies by 62.5 percent to P1.50 a minute from P4 per minute for domestic landline calls to mobile phones and mobile to mobile calls.

It also proposed an 83-percent cut in the access charges on mobile phone calls to landline phones and landline to landline calls to 50 centavos per minute from P3

Globe also recommended a 75-percent reduction in the termination fees for overseas calls to landline to 3 US cents a minute from the current 12 cents a minute. Fees on overseas calls to mobile phones, it added, must also go down by 56.25 percent to 7 US cents a minute from the current 16 US cents.

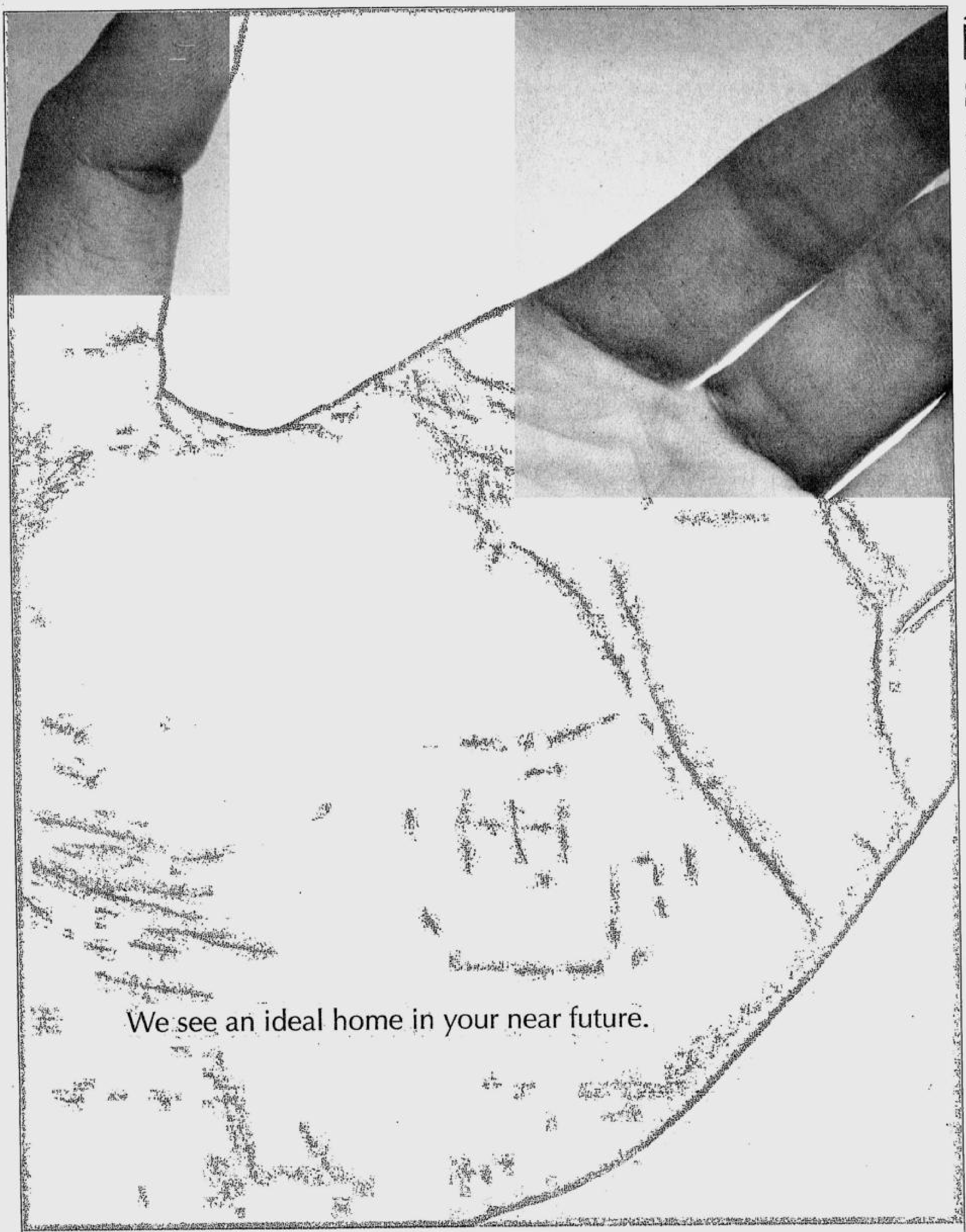
Access charges or termination rates are paid by the phone company that receives the call.

"This is a sincere effort to lower the cost of communication for Filipinos, without prerequisites on traffic volume," said Froilan Castelo, head of Globe's regulatory affairs unit.

Globe said its proposal would revolutionize pricing in the communications industry.

PLDT, in a Dec. 6 letter to Globe, said that it could include its fierce rival in its P10-per call promo if it would agree to reduce its access charges depending on the volume of calls.

For calls of up to 15 million minutes, PLDT proposed an access charge of P3.50 from the current P4 a minute for Globe to PLDT and P3 for PLDT to Globe.



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BUSINESS Monday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

WHAT'S INSIDE

Taking in more jobs, scrimping /B2-2

Budgeting, borrowing, going back to basics /B2-3

Portrait of a Filipino as a minimum wage earner

A FEW YEARS AGO, MARKETing guru Ned Roberto did a study on the poor, class D-E, and found out that some of them survive on as low as P30 a day for food.

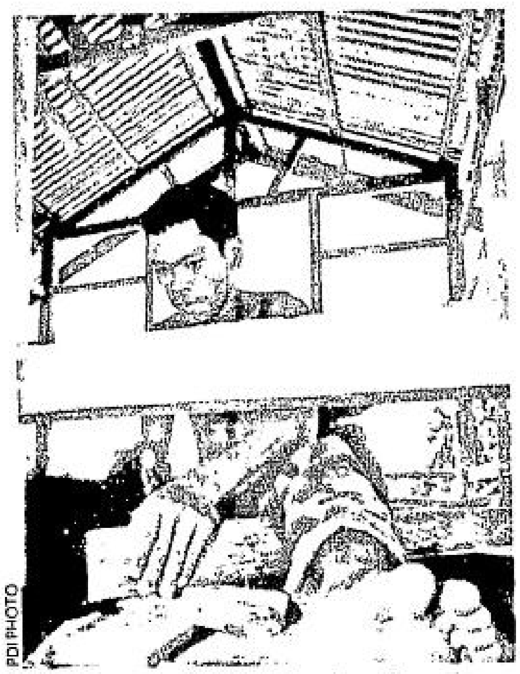
This is what they do: they budget P10 per meal a day, which buys them one pack of Lucky Me! noodles that they mix with P5 worth of green vegetables, cook in lots of water and that creates a meal.

Things have not changed. In last week's BusinessMonday, we came up with lists of stores' best selling items last year, and Lucky Me! occupied three of the top 10 best-selling items in 27 SM Supermarkets.

The minimum wage earner is different from the class D-E because he gets a regular amount every 15 days—much higher of course than the P30 some of the poorest of the Philippines' poor subsist on. But their needs are also different because there are expenses they have to incur on a day-to-day basis—fare, school needs of the children, food for the worker...

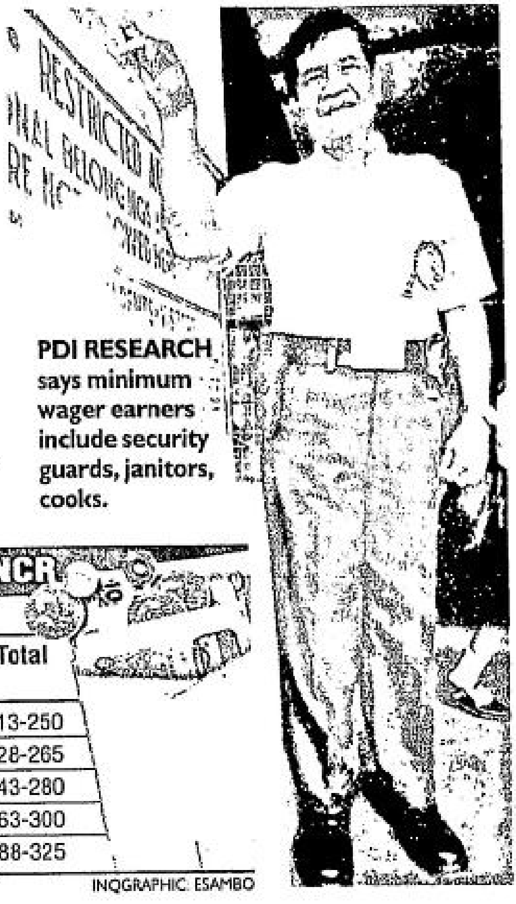
BusinessMonday takes a look at the minimum wage earners throughout the country by asking INQUIRER correspondents to profile who these people are and how they are coping with P205.92 to P325 a day.

Margie Quimpo-Espino



PDI PHOTO

... AND carpenters, woodwork workers, shop assistants.



PDI RESEARCH says minimum wager earners include security guards, janitors, cooks.

PDI PHOTO

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...ALSO bakers, workers in chocolate and candy factories, messengers.

Daily Minimum Wage Rates, NCR

Non-Agriculture (2000 - 2005)

Effectivity date	Basic Wage	Allowance	Total
Nov. 1, 2000	213-250		213-250
Nov. 5, 2001	213-250	15	228-265
Feb. 1, 2002	213-250	30	243-280
July 10, 2004	213-250	50	263-300
June 16, 2005	238-275	50	288-325

INQGRAPHIC: ESAMBO

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- Biggest [illegible] amilies in the CAL[illegible]

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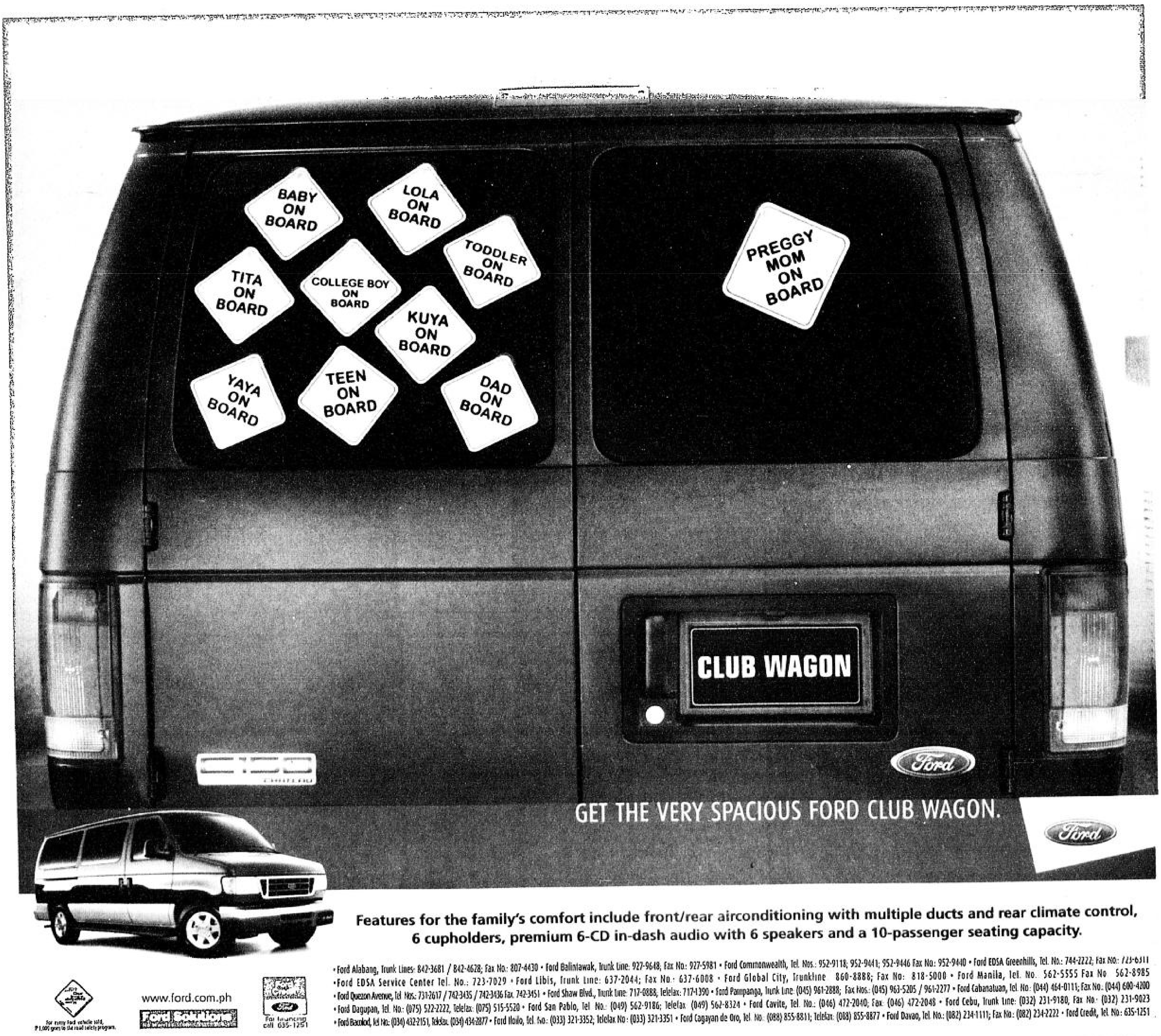

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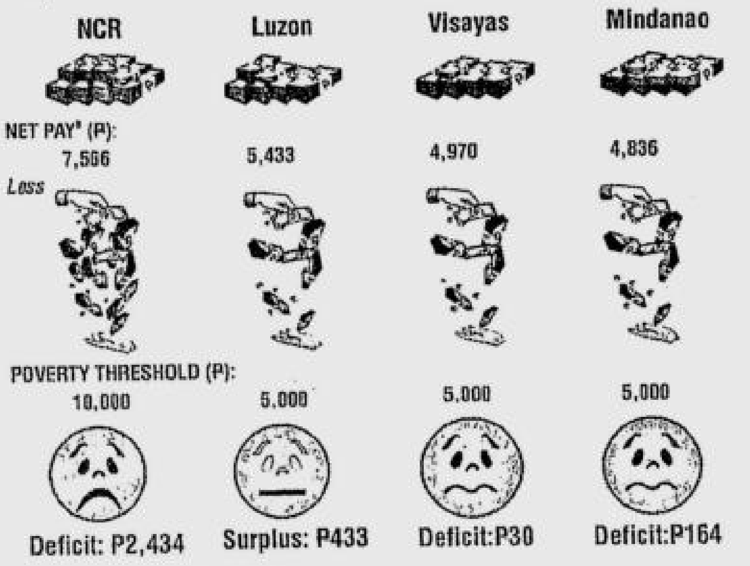
HOW YOU AND I ARE COPING

Minimum wage vs. Poverty threshold

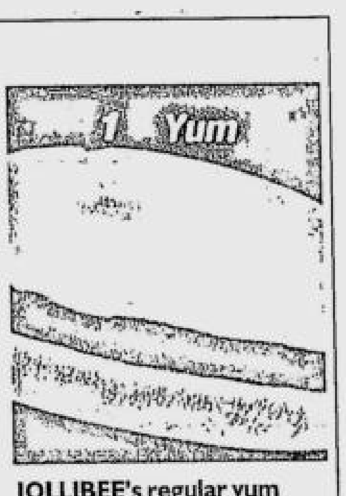
Except for those living in Luzon, a family of five with one income earner, getting minimum wage, does not earn enough for their monthly expenses.



Maricar D. Tolosa PDI Research
Sources: Department of Labor & Employment, SWS 4th quarter 2005 survey on self-rated poverty
*SWS poverty threshold question: If poor, how much money would your family need for home expenses each month in order not to be called poor anymore?
* Net Pay=daily minimum wage multiplied by 26 (days), minus taxes, SSS, etc.

PRICE WATCH ON FAVORITE FOOD ITEMS

THE REGULAR burger at McDonald's cost P16 in 1986. Today it sells for P25.



JOLLIBEE's regular yum cost P10 in 1984. Today it sells for P24.

Taking in more jobs, scrimping, dreaming of work overseas

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

FOR MANY Filipinos, going abroad is the only solution to their money problems.
EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—FOR minimum wage earner Jason Tulabut, there is no other way to survive the high prices and additional taxes but to take on more jobs during his free time.

On top of his regular job at a bottling company that pays him P224 a day, the 28-year-old father of two also works at night or during weekends either as a waiter, *kristo* (bet taker in cockfights), house painter or electrician.

A catering company pays him P500 for every occasion and an additional P200 if he dresses up the tables with linens.

The minimum percentage he gets from a derby is P500.

Repairing appliances brings in P200 or more. House painting jobs can go as high as P1,000. Tulabut says he also grabs construction work.

With several jobs, Tulabut finds rest a luxury. He eats lots of vegetables and tries to catch on his sleep when he can.

A graduate of industrial technology, Tulabut says he wants to learn more skills to enter other jobs that pay well.

He prefers to be the sole breadwinner in the family so his wife could take care of their two children (4 years old and a month-old infant) full time.

But even with several jobs his monthly pay only amounts to P11,000 which goes to food, electricity, water and the children's needs.

His family saves on house rent by living with his parents. When cash runs out, he borrows from his parents.

Tulabut and his wife have also modified their lifestyle by not going to the shopping malls or eating in restaurants.

Like many Filipinos, he dreams of working abroad.

On Thursday, he was one of the 1,795 workers who queued for the job fair organized by the city government. He submitted his application papers to a company hiring waiters for hotels in the United Arab Emirates.

But he is desperate to leave the country and work abroad.

Constantine Calilung, 30, did not want minimum wage earning jobs.

Calilung, a management graduate, had worked as a factory worker in a textile company in Taiwan for five years.

Since arriving in June last year, he has not been able to get a good paying job in the country. Calilung spent the last seven months surfing the Internet for overseas jobs or joining job fairs.

Lorenzo Regala, a security guard for the Department of Agriculture's Central Luzon office here, still gets P7,000 monthly. Regala, 48, has been working at the agency since 1980.

Regala, who has seven children, says every day is an occasion for saving money.

Instead of renting a house, his family volunteered to take care of an old house and live there for free. He bikes or walks to work to save on fare money. Five of his children are enrolled in public schools.

His wife takes on laundry jobs to earn extra, while Regala grows vegetables to reduce food costs. Meat dishes are served only once a week.

His family does not go to the malls. They watch fake VCD movies at home, bought from what he laughingly calls "SM" ("Sa Muslim").

Regala says their life has relied on loan sharks. The loans are paid when bonuses from the government come.

The P5,000 bonus he received last year settled a loan.

"I only got a few hundreds for the children's Jollibee meals," he says.

Daily, he tries his luck in the state-run lottery.

Vivencio Boa, 32, left his P250-a-day job in a factory manufacturing coconut products in Candelaria, Quezon, and moved to Pampanga to sell fruits in public markets.

Boa, a high school graduate, knows how to drive trucks, a skill he wants to put to good use in an overseas job he was planning to take in Saudi Arabia.

Goodbye to simple joys

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THREE YEARS ago, when she got married, Jennifer Seduco would always treat herself during pay day.

She would buy her favorite clothes and pamper herself with a hot oil treatment.

But with soaring prices, she says these simple joys are luxuries that she could no longer afford.

Jennifer, 25, and mother of a one-and-a-half-year-old baby, says she could hardly cope with her monthly expenses.

Her P5,000 monthly income working in a medical diagnostic center service clinic all goes to the needs of her baby.

Her husband, a seaman, sends P10,000 a month but she says this is just enough for their expenses.

She spends P800 weekly for a 1.8 kg-can of milk for her baby alone. Because her husband is away for 10 months each year, they have hired a *yaya* for P1,500 per month.

She also has to squeeze in P500 per month for the baby's vitamins and between P1,850 to P2,000 for immunization.

She also pays P2,000 per month for a room in an apartment she shares with her siblings and their families.

To save on food expenses, she contributes around P170 per month for rice with her siblings and limits her budget for viand to P10 per meal. She also brings cooked rice for lunch to the office.

"I try to live on a P50 per day budget that includes my jeepney fare and food," Jennifer says.

Aside from foregoing her shopping, she has also not visited her parent's house in San Joaquin town, Iloilo, around 47 km south of Iloilo City. She says the P100 round trip jeepney fair is too much for her now.

Because of her tight budget, Jennifer says she also failed to share some of her income with her parents.

"Things are really difficult and I can't imagine what will happen with the new taxes," she says.

Like Jennifer, many Ilonggos are focusing on basic needs like food and shelter and have done away with less important expenses. This can be seen in the shift of consumer attitude in Iloilo.

Maria Lea Lara, executive director of the Iloilo Business Club, says kiosks have sprouted all over the city as consumers are opting for cheaper products and locations where they can haggle.

These kiosks sell trinkets, food, some are homegrown coffee shops, and small restaurants.

"The consumers are tightening their belts but food still sells here in Iloilo," Lara says.

She says stores have also innovated by offering other products. A shoe store, for instance, also sells other accessories to maximize its store space and attract more customers.

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Qualification:
- Possesses a relevant and recognized degree in education. (Bachelor in Education; Graduate Diploma in Education)
- Possesses a Mandarin language teaching qualification.
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- Can design syllabi and prepare teaching materials.
- Computer literate.
- Preferably residing in Taytay or nearby areas.

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- LET passer
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- Preferably can teach related subject areas such as Arts and P.E.

Interested applicants, please contact:

SAN BEDA COLLEGE, Manila
The Human Resource Management Office
7356011loc. 2116

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Environmental Management Bureau-Cordillera Administrative Region (EMB-CAR, tel. #442-2346) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project: Procurement and Installation of an Air Quality Monitoring Equipment in Baguio City, briefly described as: One (1) lot, Towable, Continuous Automatic Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Equipment with Telemetry System that would suit Baguio City's Topography and Climate, with an Approved Budget of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) with Contract Duration of One Hundred Twenty days (120) (Installation, Commissioning and Training of EMB Personnel/ manpower) and Delivery Period of Ninety Days (90).

Checklist of eligibility requirements for bidders is available at the BAC Secretariat.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the non-discretionary "pass/ fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. Further, interested suppliers/bidders may submit documents for eligibility check as per RA 9184 (envelope A) on February 10, 2006 to the BAC Chairman upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to qualify for bidding

A pre-bid conference shall be held on February 22, 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the EMB-CAR Conference Area, DENR-CAR Compound, Gibraltar Road, Baguio City. Deadline for the submission of the following a refundable fee of 2.5% Surety Bond and Technical Specification of the equipment (Envelope B) and Bid offer (Envelope C) will be on March 1, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. and the opening of bids will follow immediately.

The EMB reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality therein, accept the offer considered most advantageous to the government and annul bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of the contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s. The EMB further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may incur for the bidding and does not guarantee that an award will be made

(Sgd.) ENGR. ROLANDO C. REYES
Chairman, EMB-CAR BAC

(PDI - Jan. 31 & Feb. 6, 2005)

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- Computer Literate

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City of San Fernando Pampanga
or call/fax (045) 961-4048

(For Business Dev't Supervisors applicants, please look for Mr. Mar Manabat or Mr. Jess Yap or can email your resumé to jessy@mail.imet.net.ph or gqydistribution.com.ph) and
(For Customer Service Representative applicants, please look for Lynn Marcelo)

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FAX (632) 815-2662
WEBSITE www.pea.gov.ph EMAIL info@pea.gov.ph

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

1. The **PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY** (formerly Public Estates Authority) is inviting all interested parties to prequalify and bid for the lease of twelve (12) pre-selected sites for outdoor billboard advertising along the landstrip of Coastal Road from Barangay Tambo, Parañaque to Barangay Ilaya, Las Piñas City.
2. Qualified Bidders
   a. Any Filipino citizen, of legal age, and
   b. Any partnership, association or corporation, public or private of which at least 70% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is organized and constituted under the laws of the Philippines.
3. Interested qualified parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00) in cash or Manager's/ Cashier's check starting February 08, 2006 until February 24, 2006 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Marketing Department, 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
4. The first pre-bid conference is scheduled on February 15, 2006 at 2:00 PM at the PRA Conference Room, 8th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
5. Required pre-qualification documents and duly accomplished Bid Documents prescribed in the Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the PRA Real Estates Bids and Awards Committee (PREBAC) on March 01, 2006 on or before 1:00 PM. Public opening of bids shall follow at 1:30 PM of the same day.
6. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address at telephone numbers 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7104 (direct line).

(Sgd.) SILVESTRE H. BELLO III
General Manager/CEO

(PDI--Feb. 4, 5 & 6, 2006)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of the following Testers per BSP specifications: 1. One (1) unit Bending Stiffness Tester (Taber Type) with computer output 2. One (1) unit Bendtsen Roughness and Air Permeance Tester with computer output 3. One (1) unit Box Compressor Tester
Approved Budget for the Contract	1. P 1,500,000.00 2. P 2,000,000.00 3. P 3,200,000.00
Contract Duration / Delivery Period	Thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of Purchase Order

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/ fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	31 January to 10 February 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	10 February 2006; 4:00 P.M.
3. Opening of Bids	28 February 2006; 2:00 P.M.
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the IRR-A of *R.A. 9184 dated 10 January 2005*
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of the following non-refundable amount to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Cashier: Item 1; P 750.00; Item 2: P1,000.00; Item 3: P 1,600.00

The BSP assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) MELPIN A. GONZAGA
Vice Chairman

(PDI - February 6, 2006)

HOW MINDANAO COPES

Budgeting, borrowing, going back to basics

INQUIRER'S MINDANAO CORRESPONDENTS Grace Cantal-Albasin, Michael Sarcauga, Julie Alipala and Joselle Badilla talked to several minimum wage earners in Mindnao to ask how they were coping with minimum earnings and rising expenses.

Budget well

Malou Magante, a school maintenance personnel from Malaybalay City, receives P2,500 a month with three free meals a day. She has two children and her husband drives a motorela (a tricycle or pedicab).

"I have to budget our earnings for the week in order to make do with what we have. My husband has to eat in carinderia because it is cheap to eat there when alone," she says.

Borrowing

"We can't depend solely on our salary. We keep on availing various loans to survive," says Tess Paano, a government employee in Malaybalay City.

Running to parents

"Through discipline and budgeting. But still there are times that my pay does not reach anymore the next pay day due to unplanned expenses that is why I still ask from my parents when I ran out of money," states En Largo, a government employee, from Cagayan de Oro City.

Credit cards and loans

"I can't survive without the credit cards and loans. I do not anymore rely on the 15-30 schemes since there is nothing to look forward to," says Prinelie P. Vasquez, a university teacher, widow with three children.

Surviving

"I think I am surviving in a way but I can't buy all the things I need. I am on a tight budget gyud!" says Ruby Yap, a city hall employee from Cagayan de Oro City.

Spend for needs only

"With my income and with today's economy, to survive is to spend only for needs such as foods, clothing and education for my child. If there is extra money it is time for the family to spend on wants. The trick here is to know what your needs are and then prioritize it. This 2 percent additional VAT (RVAT) would really affect us. What we need is to tighten our belts and spend only on things that are needed," says Jason Mabanag, 27, a credit collector in a private firm in Pagadian City, who has two kids.

Don't go to malls

"Don't spend beyond your means and avoid going to malls where one is tempted to spend on unnecessary things. Malls are lures for people to spend their hard earned money. So to survive I'd rather stay at home and watch TV and spend quality time with my family than go out to the malls.

"Staying at home is a sure way for me to keep my pocket intact," says Editho Bucol, 30, single, a government auditor in Pagadian City.

Prioritize food

"What we are earning is not enough. *Kulang. Sa pagkain pinapagkasya na lang namin.* Like one kilo of rice, budgeted *yan* for one day with my three kids. *Ang sideline ko magluto rin,*" is how Juanito Anggot, 44, a room boy in Jolo, Sulu, copes.

Do extra work

"Despite my meager income, I'm still happy that my kids are partial scholars in their school. *Kalahati lang binabayad ko sa* school. To make ends meet, I also do laundry," says Joan Anggot, 31, a hotel receptionist in Jolo, Sulu.

Less purchases

"Before, consumers used to buy half a kilo of sugar, now they buy *tingi* (small packs). Before, they buy sardines and noodles, now they buy dried fish and misua, fish paste and salt. People are also buying the cheaper kind of rice," says Julinda Alipala in Filipino, 62, a *sari-sari* store owner. "Business is slow."

Extra jobs

"I take extra jobs to make both ends meet. With six kids to feed, I have to work double," says Bobby Tabar, 29, a private employee.

Buy everything in sachets

"Belt tightened; buy sachet—soy sauce, sugar, other. No bottled ones so we save. No more cigarettes and would hike back home, it's also an exercise," says Cesar Regalado, 40, a government employee.

"No more going out. I am now a homeboy. It's hard to work long hours but get little pay," says Danny Uy, a digital artist in Davao City, in Filipino.

House rules

"If I didn't have a husband, I might be dead already. My salary is just to augment the income of my husband. We have house rules to follow to save on energy and water. Less rest and recreation. I don't know how to survive when my child goes to grade one," says Carina Cayon, a government employee, in Davao City.

No more Jollibee

"No more going out and I don't frequent Jollibee anymore. Funny but it's true. I eat more vegetables and fish," says Christine Benitex, a travel agent in Surigao City, in the local dialect.

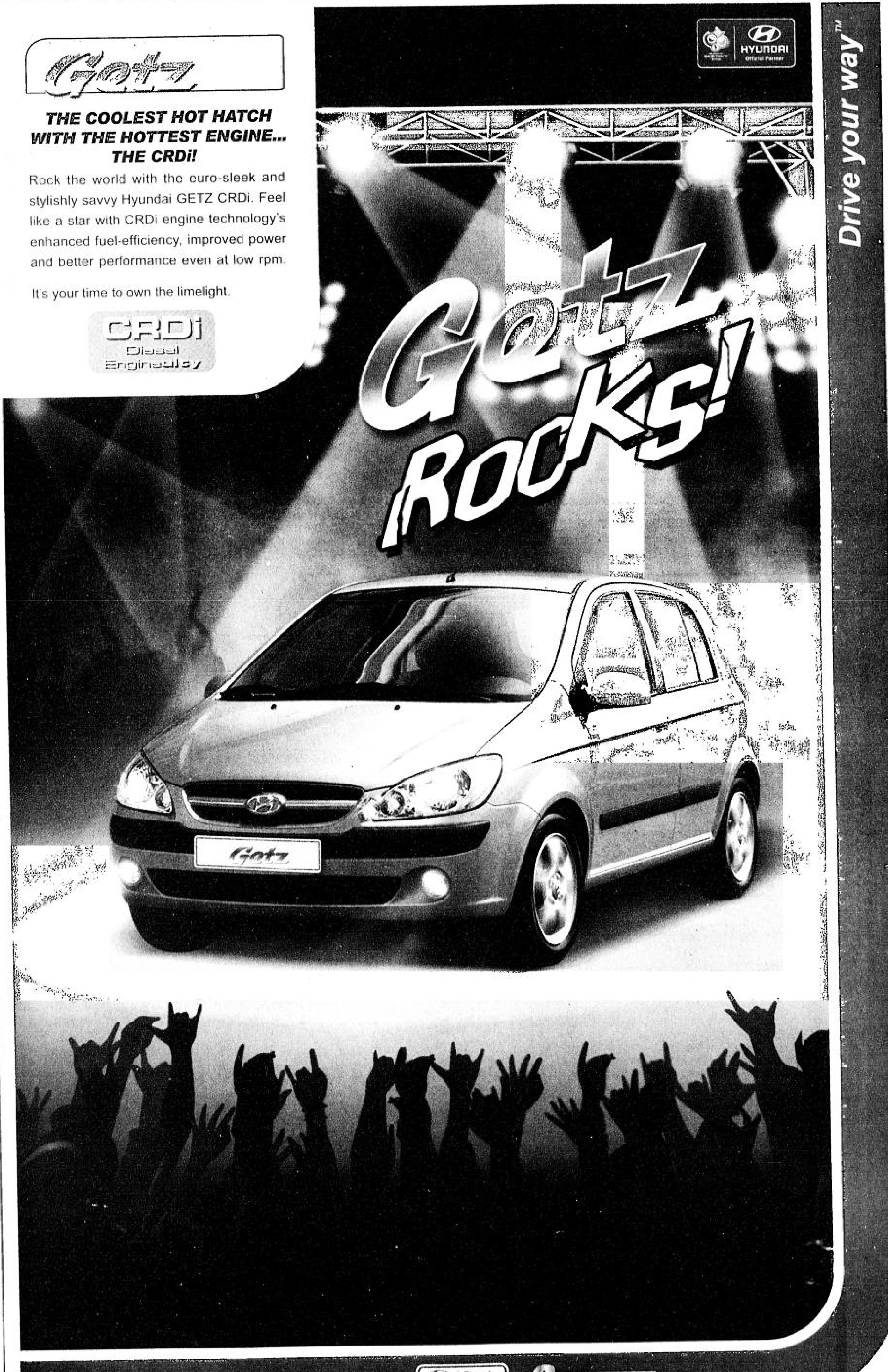
Prioritize expenses

"Budgeting, like prioritizing paying the utilities first and what things to buy for the family, like the monthly food. I usually concentrate on buying things for my daughter first before anything else and to cut my transportation cost, I report early for work. I avoid riding a taxi," says Cheryl Amor-Solarte, a government employee, in Davao City.

Commodities	2006	2005	2004	2003
egg	P 3.50	P 3.40	P 3.50	P 3.30
cooking oil (lapad bottle)	P 15.00	P 17.25	P 14.00	P 12.00
tilapia	P 62.50	P 70.00	P 62.50	P 60.00
beef rump	P 210	P 210	P1 85	-
beef brisket	P 165	P 160	P 140	P 155.00
pork liempo	P140	P 147.50	P132.50	P110.00
chicken (fully dressed)	P100	P 92.50	P97.50	P 71.15
tomato	P 25.50	P 28.00	P 10.00	-
refined sugar	P 37.00	P 26.50	P 27.00	P 28.00
red onions	P 65.00	P 61.00	P 32.50	-
bangus	P 72.50	P 90.00	P 87.50	P 80.00

* PRICE IS THE AVERAGE RETAIL MARKET PRICE OF EACH PRODUCT

SOURCE : BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS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BUT BAGUIO, CORDILLERA BOOMING

VAT heavy on Pampanga retailers

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Maridel Calma thinks the additional value added tax is a burden for retailers like her.

Two days after the VAT was enforced, she learned that the manufacturers of her stall's top sellers—Orocan plastic products and Standard home appliances—were raising their prices by five percent.

To Calma, the least thing she wanted from the national government was more taxes. The additional 2 percent on the 10-percent VAT would scare away the buyers because VAT is applied on consumer items, she says.

Higher prices, she says, also lessen her chances to compete with SM and Robinsons malls that began operating in this Pampanga capital in 2003.

"Prices are shooting up amid the stiff competition," she says.

Last year, she tried absorbing to some extent the price increases by manufacturers as a result of rising fuel costs. Calma says she did that to maintain her *suki* (loyal customers) and sustain competition with the giant malls.

Rising prices and more taxes, she says, led to diminished quality of products. That seemed true for cotton-based items like bed sheets, she says.

Last year, she stayed afloat by maintaining a reasonable profit mark up amid an increase in local fees like business permits.

Still, this meant a lower bottom line. Her earnings were just enough to cover the food budget of her family and the school allowance of her children.

Her husband's income from selling lovebirds and from renting out a sound system covers the rest of the family's expenses, she says.

"We're trying to survive the business because my husband's family has been into this for over 60 years. It's a sort of tradition," she says.

Drawing from her previous job in a bank, Calma says she props up her business edge by giving her customers excellent service and offering options. For example, she offers them a 30-day lay away plan or agrees to accept payments in checks. She also scouts for bulk orders.

She has avoided banks for capital and relies on the Golden Group Gabay Puhunan Multi-Purpose Cooperative Inc. that is based in the public market here. The cooperative's capital comes from some 800 members who are market stall owners or ambulant vendors.

A 100-day loan of P50,000 is available and charged with a 10 percent interest. Good payers get a rebate of two percent.

Calma, an officer in the stall holders' association, says she expected the city government to reciprocate the tax payments with improved services.

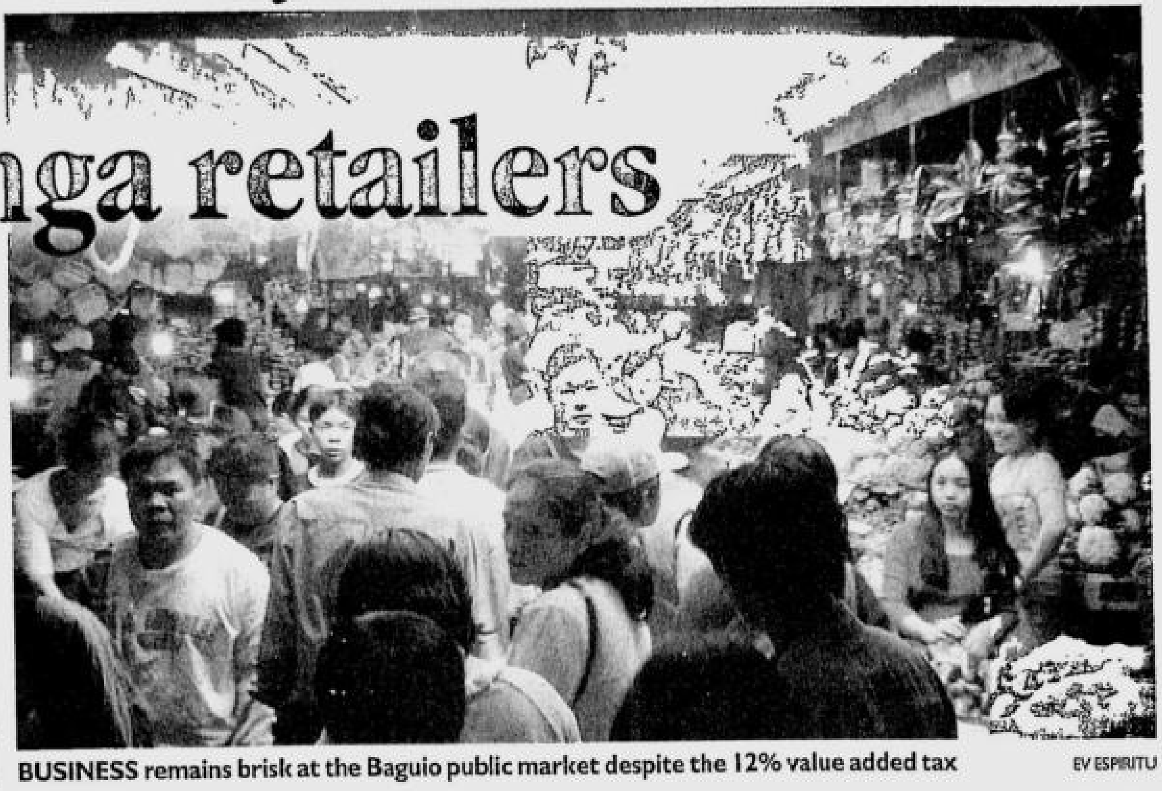
In particular, retailers want the drainage system improved to minimize flooding in the public market, get the rusting aluminum roof replaced or initiate events that would draw more buyers to their stalls.

"Dutiful tax payers deserve good services from the government," she stresses.

Aurea Yap, 66, is coping with higher costs by maximizing the façade of her Yap Marketing store on Consunji Street where she sells clothes, bags and fruits. Until 2003, she used to sell only appliances and gift items.

"What I get to earn from these cover up my expenses for local fees," she says. To minimize overhead costs, she only keeps two employees.

Ignacio Trading, one of the oldest retail shops in the city, has rented out some of its space to a mobile phone accessories shop, and fruit and toy vendors.



BUSINESS remains brisk at the Baguio public market despite the 12% value added tax EV ESPIRITU

Baguio, Cordillera

If accounts gathered by government from businessmen and trade officials are to be believed, nobody really suffered in Baguio or parts of the Cordillera when fluctuating oil prices, the VAT increases and the recent hike in world sugar prices hit the country.

Before the new VAT rates were implemented, Baguio has been the beneficiary of more than P1 billion in investments, said Carmelita Usman, Benguet director of the Department of Trade and Industry.

The investments pushed construction work in parts of the city and at the Baguio City Economic Zone, and offered new employment opportunities to residents.

Usman says the economic upswing has ensured that local buying patterns would not change significantly, despite slight increases in prices of grocery items, like sugar.

She says Filipinos living in the United States have been studying Baguio's hosting of call centers because of plans to add an all-Filipino call center to the 10 investment proposals for new call centers now being considered by the government.

"This boom is really part of a rebound because local businesses have reasserted their hold on local clients, and have restored consumer traffic they lost when malls [started operating in Baguio]," Usman said.

She said residents here realized that products were still cheaper in local shops compared to what malls offer.

"Malls are now catering to tourists actually," Usman said.

New hotels have also sprouted, despite the grim outlook on tourism that was posted earlier by local government officials.

Top sellers in time of crisis: clay stoves, wagwag items, veggies

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

STO. TOMAS, PAMPANGA—Kalang or clay stoves made in this pot-making town have enjoyed brisk sales since the price of an 11-kilogram tank of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) breached the P300 mark last year, says Feliza Pineda.

From two pieces a day, her sales rose to an average of five daily since June 2005. Three other stalls in Barangay Sapa here reported making the same sales.

People were buying the flat or rounded stoves to replace their gas-fired or electric stoves, she says.

"LPG is costly, that's what my buyers told me)," Pineda says in in Kapampangan .

The flat clay stoves sell for P100 each. For these, sundried wood or charcoal are used as fuel.

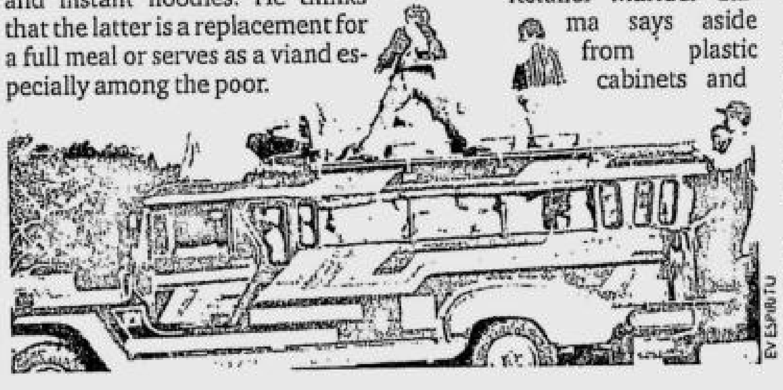
Cylinder-shaped stoves mixed with cement, selling at P120 each, are suited for shaven wood or bagasse (sugarcane shreds).

In the City of San Fernando, several vendors in the public market reported good sales for charcoal, a sack of which sells from P90 to P100.

Renato Co, owner of the Ves Mart grocery, says his consistent top sellers were canned sardines and instant noodles. He thinks that the latter is a replacement for a full meal or serves as a viand especially among the poor.

Of late, however, buyers have complained that the price of sugar shot up from P34 a kg in November to P39 a kg on Thursday, he says.

Retailer Maridel Calma says aside from plastic cabinets and drawers, her best selling items were bed sheets, blankets, towels and undergarments.



EV ESPIRITU

"I guess people were really going for basic items," she says.

In Baguio City, the value added tax has kept vegetables grown in Benguet and Mt. Province, and imported used clothes displayed on city sidewalks and *ukay-ukay* shops, the city's best selling commodities.

Carmelita Usman, Benguet director of the Department of Trade and Industry, says Baguio residents have already included *ukay-ukay* or *wagwag*, the street reference for cheap used clothes from Hong Kong, in their monthly expense budgets to cope with the weakened economy.

Benguet and Mt. Province are Metro Manila's chief sources of salad vegetables, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Metro Manila absorbs 65 percent of the daily produce, and leaves the rest to local markets that sell at low prices, said Usman, citing the DTI's daily price monitoring charts.

Farmers have blamed smuggling and foreign vegetable imports for the low demand and prices.

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
Section I. Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Supply and Delivery of Various Information and Communication Technology Equipment
(Reference No.: PB050710-EL0068 (PB2)

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO)* through the *CY 2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TRANSCO Board* intends to apply the sum of *Php 11,648,098.00* being the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply and Delivery of Various Information and Communication Technology Equipment**. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for *Various ICTs*. Delivery of the GOODS is required *within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of approved Purchase Order*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders, starting January 31, 2006 to March 6, 2006 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee in the amount of *Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00)*. The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *February 17, 2006 at 2:00 P.M.* at the same address below.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 A.M. of March 7, 2006. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form and amount.

FORM OF SECURITY	AMOUNT
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	1% of ABC
2. Bank Guarantee	1.5% of ABC
3. Surety Bond	2.5% of ABC
4. Foreign government guarantee	100% of ABC

or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on March 7, 2006 / 10:00 A.M. at the *Admin Conference Rm. same address below*. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 9812235 / Fax No. (632) 9228432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - January 31 & February 6, 2006)

IN THE VISAYAS

Work double time, get a sideline

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY may be a love month, but for Leah Esquibel, it is the time the government seems to have lost its love among ordinary wage earners like her.

This after the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo started last Feb.1 the implementation of the additional two percent of the Expanded Value Added Tax (EVAT), a move that has resulted in the spiraling of prices of goods and services.

Esquibel, 32, says that with the additional "burden" she has to work doubly hard to make meet both ends.

Esquibel works at the provincial government with a monthly salary of P15,000 but her take home pay is only P4,000 due to various loans, including those from loan sharks that she and her husband, also a government worker, incur.

"If I will only depend on my salary and that of my husband's, I don't think we can really survive with all the prices increasing with this VAT and the loans that we have to pay," the mother of a two-year old boy tells the INQUIRER.

She has a sideline—selling Avon, Sara Lee, Natasha, and Amway which earn her P3,000 a month.

She says that the bulk of their income goes to paying their P300,000 housing loan from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) which is to mature by 2008.

Based on her accounting, they have to set aside P500 monthly for water consumption, P500 for electricity consumption; P300 is being shelled out for their daily meals.

On top of this, another P4,000 has to be budgeted for the needs of their baby (milk, diapers, medicines, etc. all subject of the VAT). And she has to pay her house helper and a *yaya* P1,250 each of them).

"I asked them to be extra conscious—that they should know how to conserve power and water," Esquibel says, admitting that sometimes the salaries of her house helpers are delayed if she runs short of her money.

"I myself also scrimp. Whereas, I used to buy my clothes in the department stores, I now buy my clothes and even some t-shirts of my husband at the *ukay-ukay* stalls.

The clothes there are signature yet cheap compare to department stores," Esquibel laughs.

She also bought her shoes on one of her *ukay-ukay* forays. Her lipsticks and make up, are from the beauty companies she is a sales agent in. Now they only eat in a fast-food chain during payday.

"But it is not even a regular thing. There are times that we chose to eat in the house rather than in a fast-food chain." Eating "fancy meals" at home means a meat viand, and happens during pay day. Fish and some vegetables are the usual menu of the family, she says.

"The situation, in a way, helps us to budget our limited resources. We just try to focus on what we can afford out of our income," Esquibel avers.

Asked if she too thinks of leaving the country to find greener pasture, Esquibel says yes. "In fact, my plan of traveling abroad has been there for these past years. I don't see our economy improving in the coming years," she says.

UN
DP
INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Construction of the Maharlika Trade Center in Taguig City
under the Project "Support to the Development of Pilot Muslim Communities (SDPMC) Project"

The Development Support Services Center (DSSC) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would like to invite local and international construction companies / contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Construction of the Maharlika Trade Center for the "Support to the Development of Pilot Muslim Communities (SDPMC) Project".

The project aims to aid in the development of selected Muslim and poor communities in the Philippines. One of the components of the project is the construction of the Maharlika Trade Center in Taguig City. The trade center is envisioned to be a multi-component Muslim Center that will showcase Muslim culture and arts and serve as the central market for Muslim products in Metro Manila. It aims to stimulate investment and generate employment opportunities in Maharlika Village and nearby communities.

Bidding Documents (Requirements for Eligibility, Instructions to Bidders, Terms of Reference and Standard Conditions of Contract) may be secured personally, upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **US Dollars Two Hundred (USD 200)** for international firms and **Philippine Pesos Ten Thousand (PhP 10,000.00)** from the following address:

Development Support Services Center
United Nations Development Programme
30th Floor Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel. No. (632) 901 0273 / 901 0272
Fax No. (632) 901 0200

International suppliers are encouraged to appoint and authorize Philippine-based counterparts to secure the bidding documents and submit proposals for and in their behalf.

The abovementioned Bidding Documents will be released to all interested parties strictly from **February 7 to February 24, 2006**. The Bidding Documents shall contain all instructions on the rules, procedures, bid opening dates, and other schedules and requirements.

UNDP reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality therein, accept the bid and award the contract to the most advantageous offer to the UNDP based on UNDP criteria. UNDP assumes no obligation or responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made for this Contract.

(Sgd) ETHELIND B. CAPUNO
Manager, DSSC

(PDI--Feb. 4 & 6, 2006)

Focusing on the people's agenda

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

THE FIRST MISTAKE I MADE IN my early years as a leader was that I thought leaders distinguished themselves by rising above their people, only to find out that leaders distinguish themselves by rising with their people.

This next mistake is related to the first: I thought as a leader that the people should be focused on my agenda; and the lesson I learned was, as a leader, that I should be focused on their agenda.

A perfect example is General George Custer. Americans all know about Custer and his last stand on June 26, 1876. There are three mistakes that General Custer made that day when he led his people into the slaughter:

1. He put his agenda above the soldiers. History proves that he put his agenda above the soldiers', because Custer had tremendous ambitions—he wanted to go to the White House--and he saw this campaign as a way to get there. It was a selfish agenda, and it cost him his life, as well as the lives of many of his men.

2. He underestimated the strength of the enemy.

His last recorded words as the soldiers began to break rank and go into battle were, "Hang on, boys. There'll be enough Indians for everyone." He left behind two Gatlin guns, his most effective weapons, because he didn't think that they would need them. You should never let pride get you in that kind of trouble—to be caught off guard simply because you expected to win and became complacent.

3. He didn't prepare his soldiers for battle.

There's a moment in the film "We Were Soldiers", starring Mel Gibson, when the main character looks at his right-hand man and says, "I feel like General Custer." He was distraught because he was watching so many of his men being killed, but there was a vast difference between him and General Custer. This real-life colonel looked at his men and said, "I'll be the first on the field of battle, I'll be the last off of the field of battle; and when I go, everybody, dead or alive of our group, will be with me." That's a perfect example of somebody who puts someone else's agenda above their own, unlike Custer, who was more interested in glory than the safety of his men.

There are five things that happen when leaders put their agendas above the people:

1. They become self-serving instead of a servant. Leaders should be servants and stewards of their people—plain and simple.

2. They manipulate people instead of motivating people. I manipulate you when I move you for my advantage; I motivate you when I move you for mutual advantage. Motivation as a leader is always right; manipulation as a leader is always wrong.

3. They become self-absorbed instead of focusing on others.

Vanity takes the place of humility in this case.

4. They are image-conscious instead of improvement-conscious. This is the difference between the art of seeming and the art of doing.

5. They place their interest above the people's interest.

If you do this for too long, people will find a new leader.

Now let me just stop here for a moment and say that my background is in leading people by pastoring. When I first started out, I looked at the people in my

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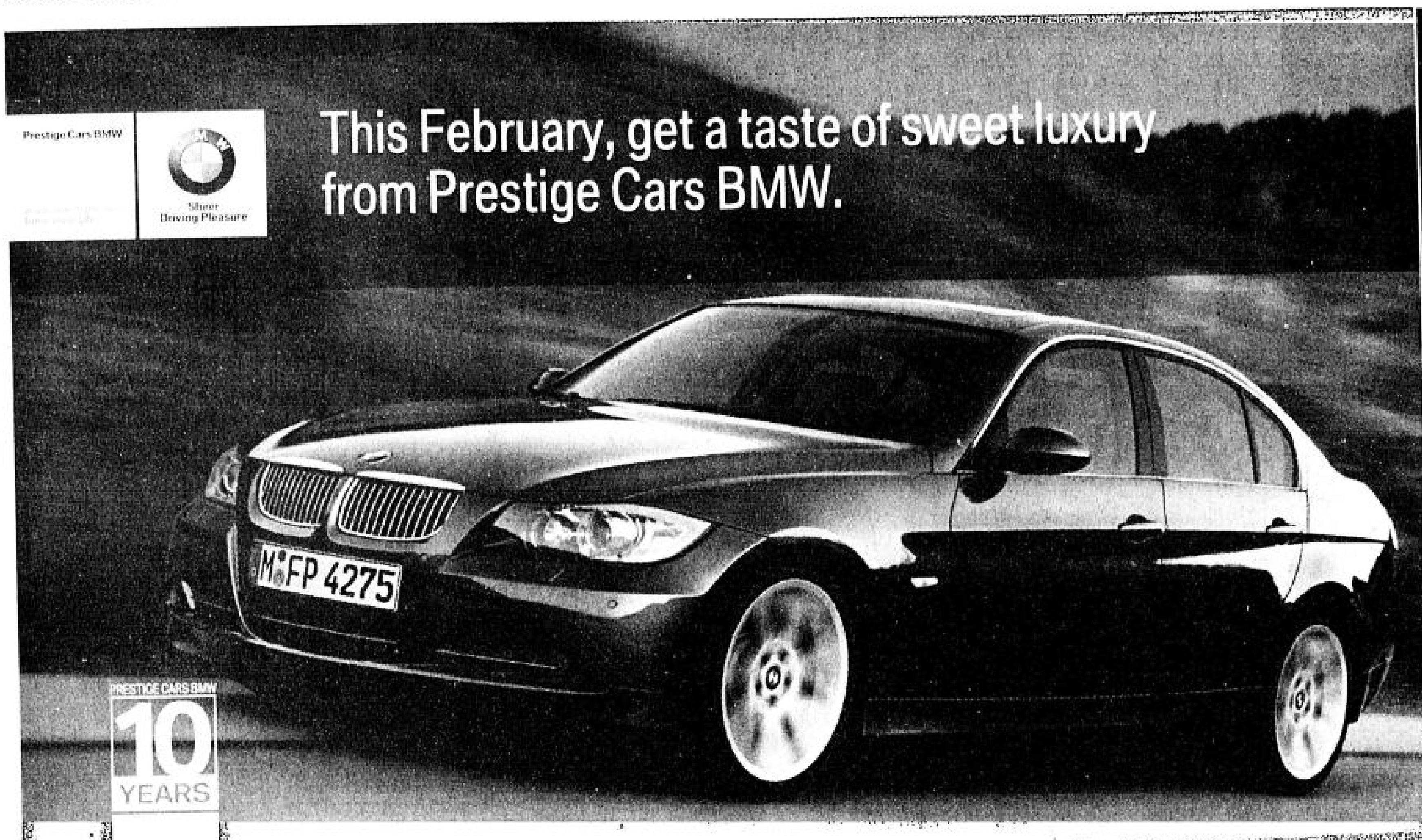

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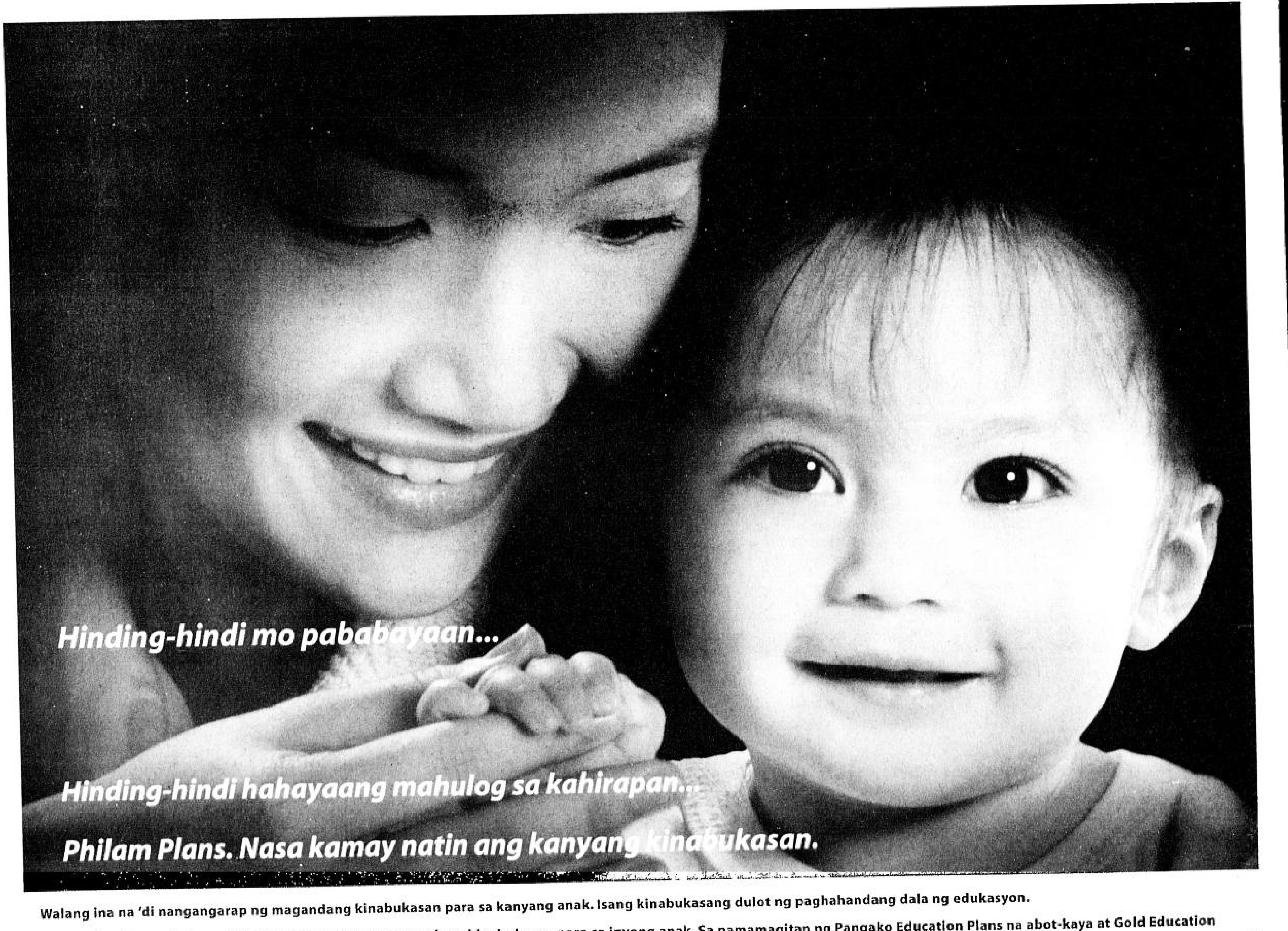
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MAP pays tribute to MVP

MANUEL V. PANGILINAN, CHAIRMAN OF telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., is the latest to be named Management Man of the Year by the Management Association of the Philippines.

Fellow business leaders came in force to pay him tribute during the awarding ceremony last Jan. 31 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Makati City.

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

27th AWARDS CEREMONY
Management Man of the Year

MANUEL V. Pangilinan receives the prestigious award as MAP officials look on. From left, former MAP president Simon Paterno, David Balangue, Ramon Dimacali, MAP president Evelyn Singson and Edward Fereira.

PHILIPPINE Daily INQUIRER chairperson Marixi R. Prieto with SM group chair Henry Sy Sr.

BRITISH Ambassador to the Philippines Peter Beckingham with Cesar Virata

EVANGELINE C. Escobillo of the Insurance Commission

ANTONIO T. Hernandez, chair of Seven Services & Management Corp.; Florido P. Casuela, chair and president of Surigao Micro Credit Corp; and Baltazar N. Endriga, consultant for the Cultural Center of the Philippines

(Seated) **GRACE** Palma-Tiangco, president of First Credit Consultants Corp.; Oscar C. de Venecia, chair of Basic Consolidated Inc. and Herman T. Gamboa, chair and CEO of Data Center Design Corp.; (standing) Franco del Rosario, managing consultant and CEO, Six Sigma Consulting and Gerry Garcia, managing director, SNC Lavalin Int'l Inc.

PETER G. Coyuito, president and CEO of First Guarantee Life Assurance Co.; Frank Alba, chair of the board of Prudential Life Plans Inc.; Jimmy Singson, managing partner of Uy, Singson, Abella & Co.; and Mabs Juan, chair and CEO of Actuarial Services Inc.

MYRNA T. Yao, COO of Richwell Trading Corp.; Zorayda Amelia C. Alonzo, CEO of Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. and Maria Gonzales-Goolsby

WILLIAM B. Go, vice chair of Chinatrust (Phils.) Commercial Bank Corp.

Elements of business leadership: Competence, integrity and passion

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Manuel V. Pangilinan

AN ORGANIZATION REVEALS itself by the men it honors, the people it remembers. In its 38 years of giving this award, the MAP has bestowed this privilege to only 27 men.

Indeed, no one could fail to be moved by a tribute such as this, coming from a profession I have served so long, and from peers I most respect.

Many have made this award possible tonight—but it is difficult to name them all. To my father, who instilled discipline and my love for sports. To my mother, who softened that paternal rigor with her gentle love. To my brother and sister, companions to my life's journey. To Anthoni Salim, who has been a friend these past 28 years and to all the men and women of First Pacific, PLDT, and Smart—thank you most sincerely.

First Pacific story

One of the many blessings I'll always be thankful for are the lessons I learned as we built First Pacific.

The story of first pacific—and that of PLDT—rest on the very basic prescription that you can succeed by "doing the right thing," even in an awkward environment like the Philippines. It also does mean that business and ethics can co-exist in this country.

Yet the concepts of "business" and "ethics" do not easily sit together in our country. One local journalist has said that "business ethics" is an oxymoron—like "jumbo shrimp," or that wonderful military expression, "friendly fire."

To be sure, there is the dilemma about "doing the right thing," because ethical behavior is not always rewarded, and unethical behavior is rarely punished.

One of the object lessons of my First Pacific experience was that those who choose to conduct business in an ethical way will, in the long run, perform better than those who don't.

A few years back, I was asked to return to the Ateneo to make the commencement address in its centennial year. I found myself talking about my past and the young graduates' future. And I had to let them in on the greatest secret of all—that when it comes to success, there are no secrets.

I told them that success can only spring from old-fashioned values, values that are transcendent, and endure well beyond the context and circumstance of our time.

Those principles are as fundamental as being honest and truthful—especially with yourself. Being diligent, committed, and hard working will also serve you well long-term.

The growth of any institution—especially a corporation—cannot be sustained without the commitment, talent and industry of its people. That's why it is always our aim to create a team of the best people available to manage our businesses. After all, quality decisions are made by quality people.

As an important corollary, we make our managers, owners of their businesses because as managers and investors, they will commit themselves more to the company's success.

Although our form is corporate, our attitude is collegial. This promotes an open and honest style. Openness breeds fresh ideas and enables the organization to renew its vigor. The ability to relate and communicate is important to us—we don't like surprises.

CEO as moral compass

Finally, the challenge to management must be to create a corporate culture that encourages and rewards integrity as much as entrepreneurship. Management—especially the CEO—must not only be exemplary stewards of corporate assets, they must also serve as the moral compass of the company.

A CEO must actively encourage his team to be open and truthful in their decision-making processes and in their internal and public disclosures. We believe that the best insurance against the perils of crossing the ethical divide is transparency.

You may ask—how does the First Pacific experience correlate with our investment in PLDT?

First Pacific made its investment in PLDT seven years ago, in 1998. While the macro environment then was stable, the telecoms industry was approaching a tipping point. International accounting rates were falling fast, severely reducing international revenues.

The cellular business was expanding exponentially, but eroding growth in fixed lines. Texting volume was growing faster than the avian flu, and eating away at our voice business. Competition was intense, and very competent. On the horizon, we could see emerging the trends toward convergence: between telecommunications and computers, between voice and data, between video entertainment and information.

Dismantling monopoly

So only seven years ago, PLDT had the habits of a monopolist. It was big, fat, and slow in an industry where changes were accelerating, with a bureaucracy and culture not different from government's—for example, employees start to queue for lunch at 11:30 a.m., and lights went out at lunch time. Our revenues were under pressure, costs bloated, debts too large, cash flows tight, and credit rating downgraded. Doesn't all this sound familiar—PLDT looking just like government?

So what did we do when we took over?

First, we stabilized the company's fiscal situation. This meant getting hold immediately of the vital functional areas of finance—to ensure that we had access to all records and obtained a full and accurate view of the financial position; purchasing—we established transparent processes in our procurement; and most importantly, we acquired the position of chief executive.

Define clear vision

Second, we defined a clear vision for PLDT. I thought that convergence—where telecoms, media, and information technology will merge onto a single platform—provided a long-term conceptual beacon for the business, and a sturdy anchor for our future strategy.

Third, we proceeded to put flesh on this skeletal blueprint by identifying our most serious problems, and prioritizing them as to which should be tackled first. Cash flows were critical because debts were high—this meant revenues and collections had to grow, costs had to be reduced, and capex managed prudentially.

Fourth, it was essential to transform the organization's mindset from being engineers to becoming marketing and customer-centric managers.

For instance, when I first reviewed the PLDT budget in December 1998 for the incoming year 1999, I was surprised that the first item for discussion was not sales—but capital expenditures for equipment! You can probably infer the reason why.

On Feb. 27th, PLDT will report its results for the year 2005. Our net profit number is likely to lie north of P30 billion—another historic high for PLDT, and for any other Philippine corporate. In this regard, let me just say this—that I wish we're not alone—because this country needs more PLDTs, reporting world class numbers and performance, and attracting the attention of global markets.

It's also necessary to put our profit number in a broader context. For the past seven years, our consolidated capex spend has aggregated approximately $2.7 billion—manifesting categorically our commitment to this country's future. In 2005, we returned a significant amount of cash by way of dividends to our thousands of shareholders—more than P15 billion—but only after sacrificing four years of dividends, so that our debts could be reduced, and moneys invested for expansion.

Largest cash dividend

PLDT is likely to be the company which pays the largest cash dividend in the country for 2005. Our taxes paid to local and national treasuries—income taxes, VAT, franchise taxes and the like—will amount to about P18 billion in 2005, and are certain to increase significantly in the coming years as our profits continue to rise.

In the seven-year period spanning the years 1999 through 2005, our consolidated tax bill has reached P85 billion.

At this time, PLDT finds itself approaching another tipping point. The onset of new and disruptive technologies that are Internet-based and broadband, are starting to enter the mainstream, and to undermine the current business models that have built and sustained the wireline and wireless businesses of telecom companies throughout the world.

But this demands new investments—in next generation I/P network, in 3G cellular, in Wifi/Wimax, in IP/TV, in mobile video, in mobile commerce—that will breed new products and services, new revenue streams, and entirely new businesses.

What the great German statesman Bismarck once said may be relevant to PLDT reinventing itself yet again—"great changes do not come upon us with the even speed of a railway train. Instead, it moves forward in spurts, but with irresistible force."

Seen in the context of the future, our strong financial results are in fact critical in underpinning the next round of significant investments required for the next generation infrastructures.

Nonetheless, I must admit that it took years, time, and pain for PLDT to get to where it is today. And as to First Pacific, our track record has been checkered by the occasional failures. The abiding message must be that your past successes teach you that you can succeed again and, with your failures, lessons can be learned that enable you to move on.

Ultimately, however, whether in private or public life, the essentials for successful leadership are not altogether different:

"First, possessing a clear and focused vision of what needs to be done.

"Second, admitting that problems do exist, identifying and prioritizing them, developing options to solve them.

"Third, just do it!"

Passion, sports, management

I've been asked a number of times about what comprise good management? First of all, I say that business leadership is the more proper term. Secondly, I note that it has three basic elements: competence, integrity, and passion. And amongst this trinity, I regard passion as the most important.

Bill Bradley could not have put it any better when he wrote, "I play basketball for the joy of it—there is no feeling comparable to feeling passionate about sport. That moment of beautiful isolation, the result of the correct blending of human forces at the proper time and to the exact degree.

"With your team, before a roaring crowd, one inhabits a private world—where no one else but you—can sense the supreme delight of the moment."

It is passion—which all of you in this room must have felt when Manny Pacquiao won recently—that finds its roots in basic values, and connects to a purpose higher than one realizes. One such purpose is national unity. Witness the Philippine Daily Inquirer headline a day after Pacman's victory—"One nation in jubilation!"

Conversely, I believe our tragedy today is our apathy. This is a problem of the spirit. We must learn to believe in ourselves and in our future. At PLDT, the optimists have it, not because they are right but because they are positive. That is the way of achievement, of improvement, and of success. Pessimism can only offer the consolation of being right—but what's the point being right without producing any benefit?

There's a saying in Africa which goes like this—"the hand that receives is always lower than the hand that gives." This tells us that the best path to welfare comes from within, and that no other empowerment is as effective as self-empowerment.

This brings me back to my initial thought tonight that this award celebrates people who are passionate about their work and about their lives, and who excel in them.

'Merchants of hope'

I'd like to close by noting what Napoleon once wrote, that leaders must be "merchants of hope." Let me now leave you with my own hopes:

I hope for a great future for our country—a future in which we can match our strength with our morals, our wealth with wisdom, our power with purpose.

I hope for a Philippines that steadily raises the welfare of, and enlarges the opportunities for, all of our people, without regard to privilege or pedigree.

I hope for a Philippines which protects its natural environment, rewards fulfillment in sports, and recognizes achievements in business and in arts.

And i hope for a Philippines that commands respect throughout the world, not only for its people, but also for its culture and history as well.

(Edited acceptance speech delivered by the author during the conferment of the "MAP Management Man of the Year 2005" Award on Jan. 31, 2006. The author is MAP member and chair of PLDT/Smart. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

Inactive corporations

Corporate Securities Info

Raul J. Palabrica

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME truth to the widely-held belief that Filipinos are, by nature, sociable and gregarious.

Every month, an average of 1,400 certificates of incorporation is issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission to stock and non-stock corporations.

To date, some 250,000 corporations are registered with the SEC.

The list includes foundations that are organized for charitable and socially-oriented purposes, civic organizations and neighborhood clubs. Even drivers of jeepneys and tricycles that ply the inner streets of urban areas have taken to the idea of giving their associations a juridical personality.

Statistics show that, after getting their charter, many of these corporations cease operating or are not heard from again.

The usual reasons for the corporate demise are: Inability of the stockholders to pay in full their subscription, disagreement among them on how to run the business, and, if the corporation was organized for a specific purpose, e.g., to participate in the bidding for a lucrative project, failure to accomplish that objective.

Revocation

In October last year, the SEC revoked the certificates of incorporation of corporations registered in 1998 and 1999 that failed to submit the mandatory annual reports—General Information Sheet and financial statements—for the last five years.

This was done because the papers of these inactive corporations put a heavy strain on the SEC's already congested warehouse. Since the probability of referring to these documents in the future is quite remote, the high cost of converting them to digital or microfiche form does not make good economic sense.

The notice of revocation was published once in a newspaper of general circulation.

This method was used because, based on initial findings, most of the unheard from corporations and their stockholders have either changed their addresses and did not leave any forwarding address, or ignored the letters sent to them to explain their failure to comply with the reportorial obligations.

Petition

Despite the revocation, however, the affected corporations or any of the interested stockholders can, if they want, request the SEC to restore their corporate identity and powers.

The first step towards this goal is to file a petition for the lifting of the revocation. The petition (a form is available at the SEC offices) should state the reason(s) for the corporation's failure to comply with the annual reportorial requirements.

The petition should be accompanied by a resolution signed by a majority of the directors authorizing its filing, duly certified by the corporate secretary.

Before, the board resolution was not a requirement. It had to be imposed after a number of petitions for restoration were opposed or questioned by stockholders who did not approve of the filing of that action by their fellow stockholders.

The board resolution endorsing the petition is aimed at preventing the SEC from getting embroiled in a dispute similar to that of heirs of a deceased fighting over the right to take possession of the corpse.

Penalties

If the SEC finds the documents submitted in order, the petitioner has to pay the fees and penalties imposed for failure to comply with the reportorial requirements for the preceding years.

The charges are computed based on the corporation's retained earnings for the affected years.

Some stockholders of affected corporations who find the fees and penalties stiff opt to withdraw their petition and apply instead for the registration of new corporations.

There's nothing wrong with this approach as long as the new corporation does not carry the same name as that of the dissolved corporation. If it does, the use of the old name will be allowed only on condition that the fees and penalties are paid first.

A contrary treatment would, in effect, allow errant corporations to profit from their failure or refusal to comply with their corporate regulatory obligations.

The filing of the petition enables the affected corporations to legitimize their operation if they are still in business and avoid the possibility of paying bigger fines if caught later.

For stockholders who have some emotional attachment to the name of the dissolved corporation, such as, it's the name of a loved one or was the name used by their parents to start their business, the lifting of the revocation will give them and their children a 50-year lock on the right to use that esteemed name.

(Feedback at rpalabrica@inquirer. com. ph)

DOT readies second business mission to Japan

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM (DOT) IS preparing for its second business mission to Japan.

DoT Secretary Joseph Ace H. Durano said the move would sustain and build on the gains of last year's successful marketing efforts in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, which contributed a lot to the country's 2.6 million foreign arrivals for the full-year 2005.

"This 2nd Philippine Business Mission (PBM) will firm up the agreements made in last year's 1st PBM while giving a broader meaning to the ongoing celebration of the Philippine-Japan Friendship Year," Durano said.

The Philippine-Japan Friendship Year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries since the ratification of the Peace Treaty and Reparations Agreement on July 23, 1956.

Since then, Japan has evolved to become the Philippines' second largest investor, trading partner and source of tourists, and largest donor of official development assistance.

Durano said the 2nd PBM would also reinforce the now well-established Premium Resort Islands Philippines brand in Japan, support the new sub-campaign "Philippines: Wellness from the Inside Out," push Filipino exports, and promote the country's destinations to the 17-million Japanese outbound market.

Scheduled in Osaka on May 22, Nagoya on May 24, and Tokyo on May 26, the 2nd PBM will encompass trade and investments in various aspects of tourism such as leisure, sports, retirement, beauty and wellness, shopping, adventure, golf, and eco-tourism.

Such target investments may contribute to the DOT's ongoing efforts in increasing the country's 10,000-room capacity, with an additional 2,000 now being built in various parts of the archipelago.

A substantial increase in the country's room capacity is needed to accommodate the five million foreign tourists targeted by the DOT in 2010.

Nonetheless, this year's target of three million arrivals can be sufficiently covered by the current capacity of 10,000 and the additional 2,000 rooms.

Through the 2nd PBM, members of the local tourism industry can find Japanese buyers or sellers of travel packages, investors in new projects, and partners for joint ventures and other business linkages.

"With the PBM, being an official government-led mission, our local tourism players won't have problems in seeking out their Japanese counterparts and making arrangements for business meetings. The Japanese government will assist the Philippine delegation on this matter, with all the warm welcome and support they can provide," Durano said.

Durano is inviting the members of the local industry to join the mission. For inquiries or registration, interested parties may call the DoT Team Japan secretariat (tel. 5251153, or email pcvcmemb@dotpcvc.gov.ph).

Japan is projected to account for over a million, or more than 20 percent, of the country's five million target arrivals by 2010.

Focusing on the people's agenda

From page B5

church and said to myself, "I wonder how they can help me. I've got this vision, I've got this goal; here's what I want to do—I want to build this church."

It was a huge day in my life when I went the opposite way, asking the question, "How can I help them? How can I add value to them?" When I did that, I began to have some huge breakthroughs.

In my beginning days, I also wanted to sit down and say, "Listen to me, listen to me, listen to me," and I realized that if I really wanted to lead people, I needed to shut up and listen to them. I needed to walk slowly through the crowd, and keep my ears to the ground.

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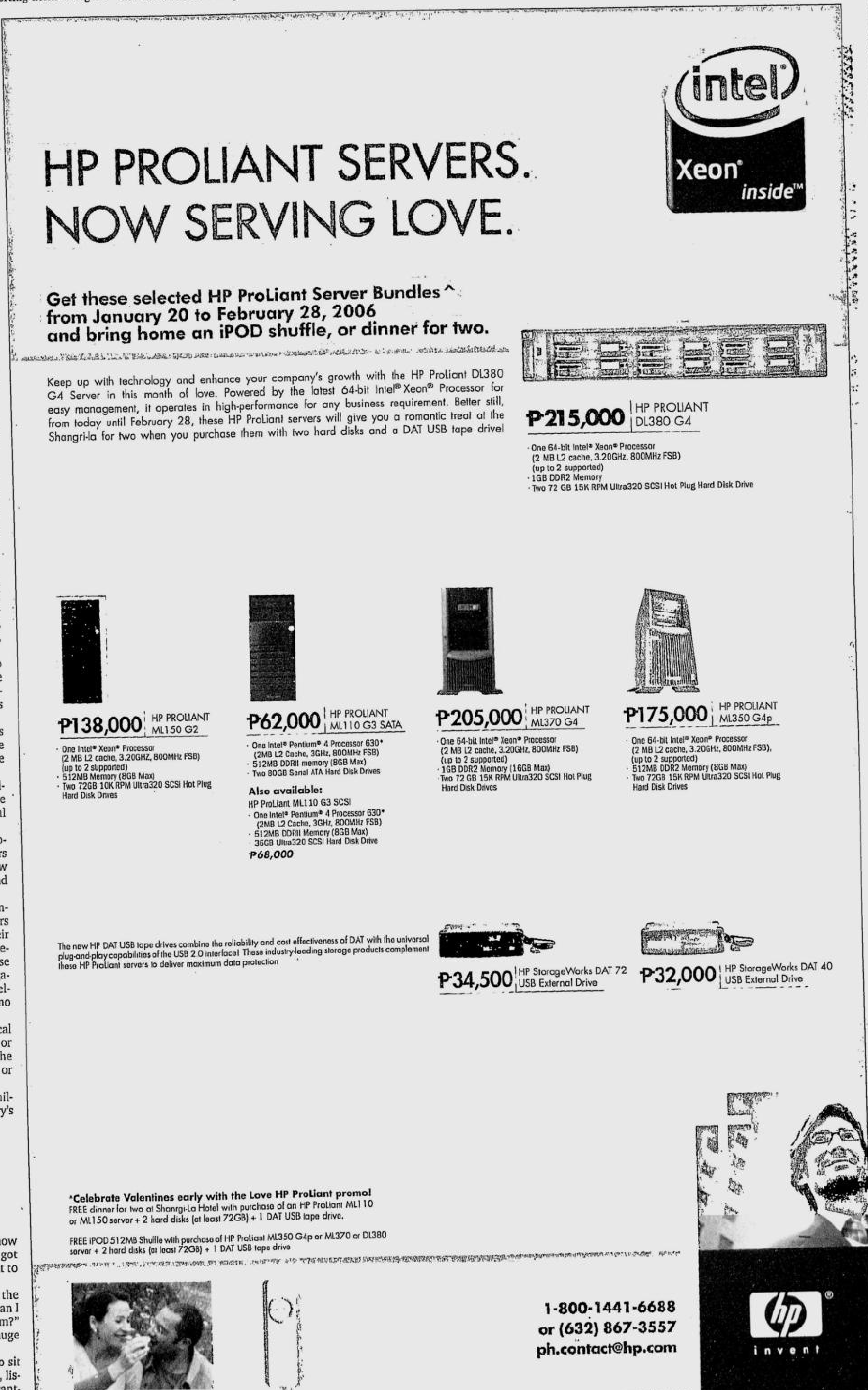

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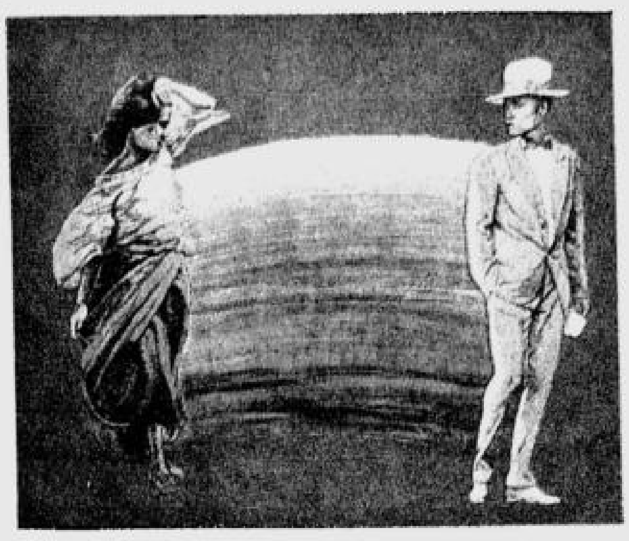
Bencab makes his mark in Singapore

By Rene E. Guatlo
Contributor

BENCAB working on paper pulp at STPI



"THE MEETING"

BENCAB: IMPRESSIONS" RECENTLY opened at the Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI) with chair Ambeth Ocampo of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts as guest of honor. It is on view until Feb. 25.

The exhibit features etchings, woodcuts and paper-pulp works described in the exhibition catalog as "beguiling though they are images of despair, isolation and poverty."

All the artworks were executed on paper specially made at the Institute by master papermaker Richard Hungerford using abaca pulp and white cotton.

Bencab was artist in residence at STPI between May and June 2005, and the works on exhibit are the products of his residency. While the artist is better known for his canvases, graphic art is one of his first loves, and he first excelled and became famous for his prints.

The etchings, woodcuts and large-scale paper pulp works featured in the exhibit are the result of collaboration with specialist printmakers of the Institute led by Eitaro Ogawa , with the support of Hungerford and his staff of papermakers. Together, they reinterpreted Bencab's familiar images from the "Sabel," "Larawan" and "Isadora" series in never-before-seen scale and colors, using state-of-the-art equipment and facilities of the Institute.

For the nude studies, Bencab and Eitaro experimented with different sizes of copper plates and various etching techniques, with the artist using the plates as his sketchbook. Twelve impressions were made for each image in the series.

Images from "Larawan" are featured in large monoprints with etching, aquatint and collagraph (in two sizes: 66"x52" or 52"x66"): "Flight ca. 1900," "Flight ca. 2000," "In Servitude" and "The Meeting."

"In Servitude," with a Filipina nanny nursing a Caucasian baby, is especially poignant and resonant in the context of 21st-century overseas Filipino workers, most especially in Singapore.

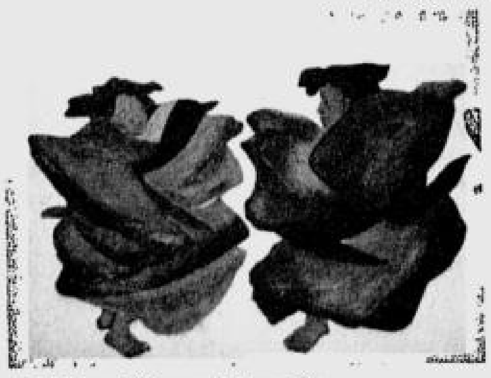
For the woodblock prints, Bencab and his partner printmakers used shaped paper, and utilized a combination of woodblocks, collagraph and etching plates to form the textured finished works of a man and woman in the 10 monoprints that make up the series.

Nine large-scale paper-pulp artworks were created using a novel technique which involved using shaped wet paper as "canvas" and applying pigmented paper pulp in layers to form the image. The resulting layers of pigmented pulp were then fused and squeezed by a 150-ton platen press to drain the water. Next, the still damp layer was placed inside a heated stack dryer and for 18 hours warm dry air passed through the stack.

Beyond boundaries

"I enjoyed working with Eitaro, Richard and their team of printmakers and papermakers," Bencab said. "It was really a collaborative effort between the artist and the STPI creative/technical staff that resulted in this new set of works that I would not have been able to do on my own. I am used to working alone, in the confines of my own studio. Having the privilege of

BENCAB/C3



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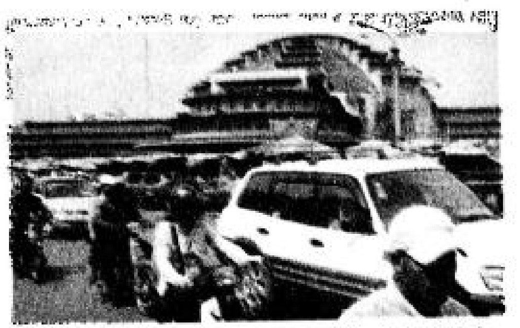
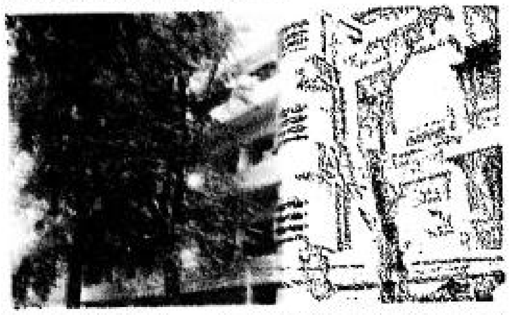
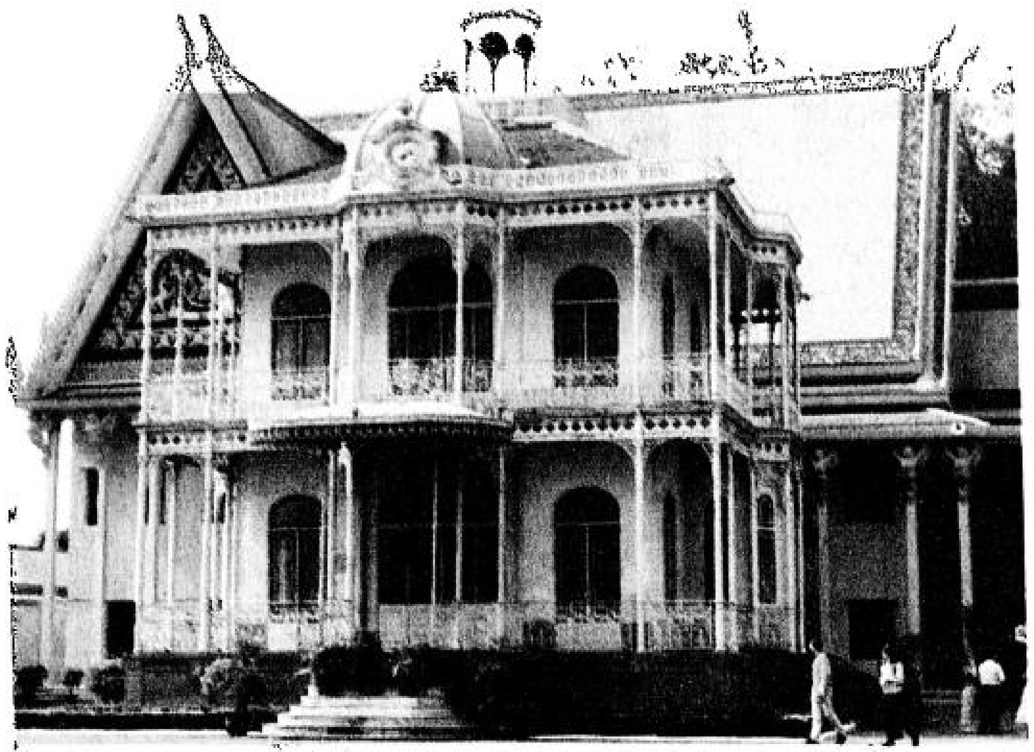


PSAR Thmei (Central Market) built in 1934-1938 is a fantastic tropical building designed like a perforated concrete basket.



BUILDINGS from the Art Deco era in central Phnom Penh add much to the identity and flavor of the city.



A 19TH CENTURY prefabricated all-steel pavilion assembled in the Royal Palace compound was a gift from Napoleon III to the King of Cambodia.

Everyday urban heritage still lives in Phnom Penh

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

WHEN I FIRST SAW PHNOM PENH almost 40 years ago, it was a sleepy town. Trees lined its wide boulevards, shading tile-roofed tropical bungalows and low buildings in the French-Indochinese colonial style.

Having recently survived a turbulent three decades, the city still manages to retain the identity I remember. A bit less sleepy than it was in 1968, its pace today is still laid-back. Nobody drives faster than 30 kph in the city. That is the pace of life in Phnom Penh today, staying well within second gear.

The purpose of this visit was official, a Unesco mission to plan initiatives to encourage government and nongovernment authorities to initiate nationwide preservation measures for the rapidly vanishing urban heritage in Cambodian cities.

The eye-opening issues discussed were surprisingly relevant to the present conservation situation in the Philippines. Much is applicable to our situation. There is a great deal to learn from our Asean neighbor.

Angkor, unsurpassed as the most outstanding collection of monuments in the country, is either a blessing or bane to Cambodian heritage. Overshadowing all other heritage sites in Cambodia and a powerful tourism earner, it is understandably the focus of government conservation efforts.

It is still not understood or even seen by many that the everyday urban heritage in the country is of equal importance as the great monuments of Angkor.

Heritage is not confined to the monumental Angkors of the world. Of equal conservation value, urban heritage is the traditional, nonmonumental "ordinary" streetscape where daily city life takes place. These ordinary streetscapes record and tell the story of today's everyday existence in the same manner monuments tell a part of the everyday existence of past times.

Some Phnom Penh structures are obviously urban heritage: wats, stupas, royal palaces, monuments and parks. Equally obvious are grand buildings, whether public, private, or residential villas from the French colonial period lining grand tree-bordered avenues that evoke French cityscapes.

Unappreciated

Existing alongside the grand urban heritage are groups of unappreciated, outstanding but forgotten architecture from the 1950-1970 era still remaining in many central streets and neighborhoods. These are the ordinary urban images that must be preserved along with the monumental and the grand because together they form the urban heritage that gives Phnom Penh a unique identity.

Heritage of the everyday in Phnom Penh consists of architectural blocks scattered throughout tightly packed city center streets, shophouses, office and apartment buildings, the rapidly vanishing cinema theaters built in the 1960s. The undisputed star of the city is the magnificent Psar Thmei (Central Market) of 1938.

It is not all congestion in Phnom Penh. The city has much breathing space. Former colonial officials transplanted broad tree-lined avenues, legacy of French urban planning influenced by Baron Haussmann from the Napoleonic era which gives Phnom Penh a sense of grandeur.

Grand avenues and packed urban districts behind them form the urban network that sustains the daily life pattern of Phnom Penh residents today. To raze the network obliterates the local way of life, ends continuity with their shared urban past, and erases collective urban memory. It also removes the identity of the city.

THE NATIONAL Stadium by Cambodian architect Vann Molivann brilliantly combines traditional Khmer motifs with the 1960s architectural idiom.

Conservation legislation is urgently needed to protect the fragile urban network. The first step required toward formulating a legal framework is to commission a national inventory of heritage structures. None exists in Cambodia (or in the Philippines) and it is imperative to prepare one immediately.

Criteria for declaring structures of heritage value should be established. A list of historical, urban, architectural and intangible values must be agreed upon, as well as appropriate conservation measures be supported by the government, which include technical assistance, financial and psychic incentives for private conservation.

Above all, residents should be involved in conservation of their neighborhoods. Public-private cooperation assures that local residents enjoy the benefits of conservation. It is their city after all.

Amazing

The residents of Phnom Penh have an amazing city that I discovered while following a walking-tour map provided by Geoff Pyle of Khmer Architectural Tours.

My walk began at the Royal Palace at the foot of a vast park facing the Tonlé Sap River, followed by a visit to the National Museum to view its magnificent collection of Khmer art.

The memorable part was a *cyclo* (pedicab) ride through central Phnom Penh to experience vibrant street life happening around a jumble of buildings ranging from dilapidated royal villas, shophouses, stunning multistory Art Deco buildings from 1930-50, spectacular modern Le Corbusier-inspired structures of the 1960s, and newly built nondescript construction of the 1990s.

It was a living scene. Hawkers peddled their wares. Shopkeepers unloaded stock on the sidewalk. The aroma of street food was everywhere. It gave a pulse to Phnom Penh.

Contact Khmer Architectural Tours www.ka-tours.org to book Phnom Penh walking tours guided by local architecture students. If you prefer discovering Phnom Penh by yourself, download free walking-tour maps provided by Khmer Architectural Tours from the same web page.

More information on buildings of interest in Cambodia is available from Heritage Watch at www.heritagewatch.org.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com

Ode to woman

By Constantino C. Tejero

ART-LOVERS USED TO FIL Delacruz's black-and-white mezzotint are bound to take a second look at this artist's latest works.

Many would likely be unprepared not only for the ingenious blending of painting and relief but especially for the abundance of colors amid a wealth of forms on display.

We're talking of "Samba," 12 pieces in oil on wood, in The Crucible at Artwalk, L/4, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Each piece has an elaborate imagery painted on irregularly shaped slabs of recycled or found wood, with gold-leafed carvings of intricate vegetal forms, and rendered so as to resemble *retablos* in single frame, diptych, or even triptych. The format alludes to religious worship, of which the exhibit's title is about. All these pieces, in fact, are a homage to the feminine principle.

The central image is of woman an idealized in the manner of Tam Austria, that is, limned in clean angular lines, elongated forms and pure colors amid teeming tropical vegetation. (Both Delacruz's and Austria's forms and motifs bear strong resemblance to Théodore Rousseau's naïf.)

She is the *diwata* of the mythic Philippine forest, the female deity of local lore, specifically of the Manobo of Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat. (The artists had lived for some years with this cultural community, and from it he continues to draw many of his symbols and ornamental motifs.) But, considering that Delacruz studied Fine Arts at University of Santo Tomas, this ethnic goddess could as well be the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The image appears earthbound yet unreal. She is symbolic of the life force, of both sexuality and spirituality, amid a fecundity of forms in rich hues of red, orange, yellow, red, pink, green, blue, violet, white and brown.

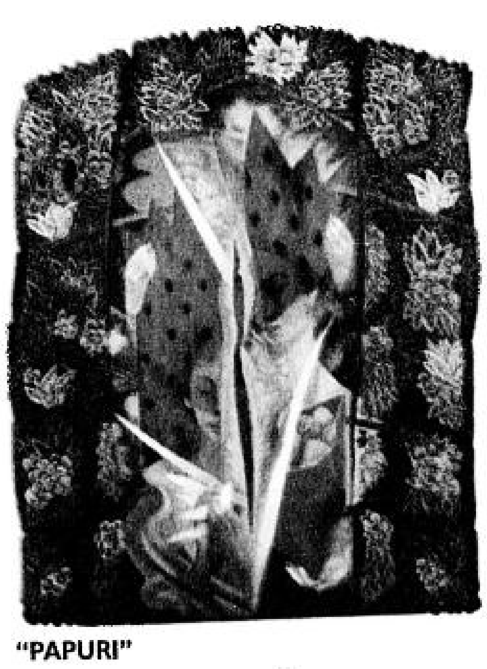
Here the female form—whether as idealized face, naked body or symbolic flower—becomes an icon, and both artist and viewer its devotees.

The pieces' titles themselves are each a song of adoration and praise: "Lualhati," "Biyayang Likas," "Papuri," "Kapayapaan," "Makulay na Liwanag," "Dalangin," "Sampalataya," "Bukang Liwayway," "Nadama," "Pinagpala."

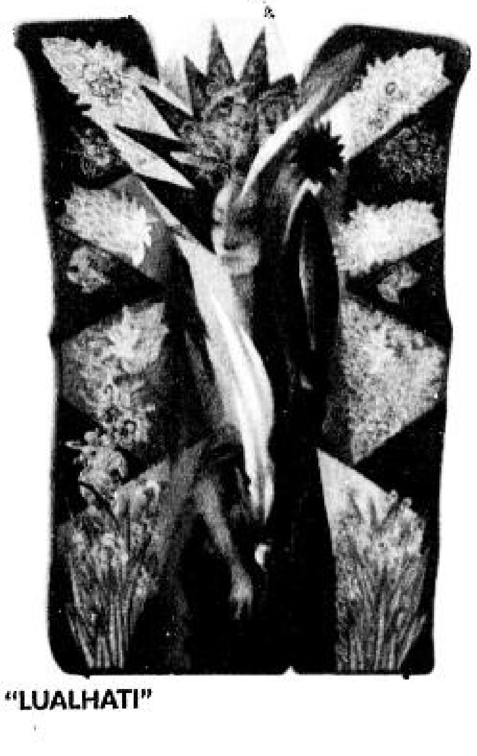
This is Delacruz's first solo show since his last exhibit of lithographs five years ago. Noted as a graphic artist, who served as president of the Printmakers Association of the Philippines for a decade, he is bound to surprise many of his fans with this one.

Delacruz learned the basics of etching and woodcut from Mario Parial. He went on to win for three consecutive years the grand prize for print in the Art Association of the Philippines competition. He was given the Thirteen Artists Award by the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 1992.

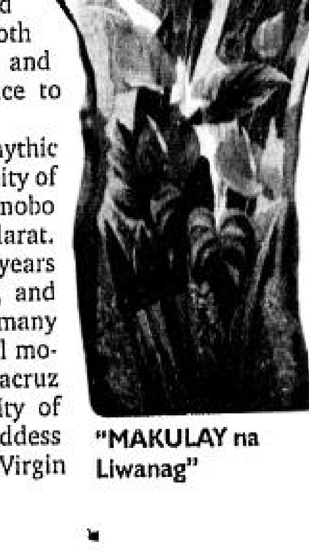
Long acknowledged as a master of printmaking, he has returned to the art scene to explore new mediums. Painting and sculpture are not really new to Fil Delacruz, it's just that he's now out to master them.



"PAPURI"



"LUALHATI"



"MAKULAY na Liwanag"

VISUAL ARTS

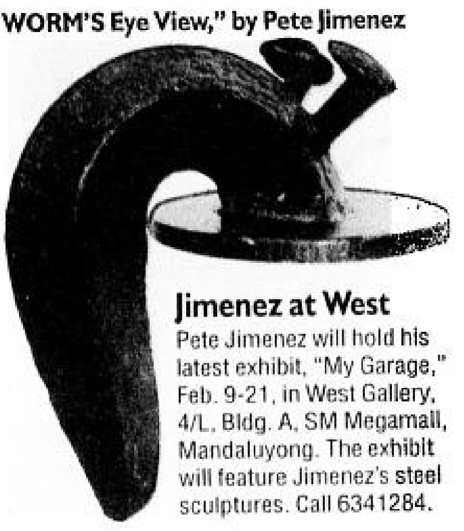
D'Bayan at Crucible

Igan D' Bayan mounts his first one-man exhibit, "Apocalypse Jukebox," which opens on Feb. 7, 6 p.m., at Crucible Gallery, 4/F, SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong. His paintings in oil or acrylic on canvas are inspired by rock bands (from Pink Floyd to Radiohead), icons (Bob Dylan, John Lennon and David Bowie), songs, as well as album covers (Hipgnosis and Roger Dean). The works will be on view until Feb. 19. Call 6356061.

Raquepo at Mag:Net

Jucar Raquepo presents "Abstract Thought toward Emphatic Thought," Feb. 7-28, at Mag:Net Gallery, G/F Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas Ave. cor. Sedeno St., Makati. Call 8177895 or log on to www.mag:netcafé.com.ph.

"WORM'S Eye View," by Pete Jimenez



Jimenez at West

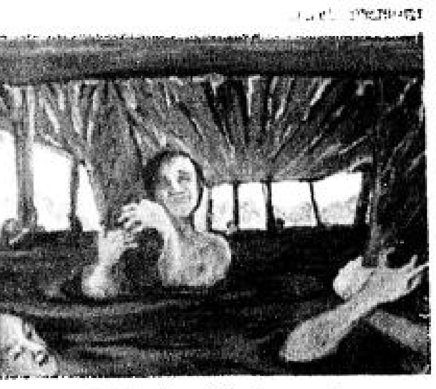
Pete Jimenez will hold his latest exhibit, "My Garage," Feb. 9-21, in West Gallery, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. The exhibit will feature Jimenez's steel sculptures. Call 6341284.

Escora at Alliance Française

Alliance Française de Manille is hosting an exhibit of drawings by Fernando Escora, "Naked Series," which opens today and will run until Feb. 24. The subjects vary from nude, lovers and subtle social commentary. Call 8957441/7585 or e-mail cultural@alliance.ph.

Lee at Finale

Romeo Lee presents his one-man exhibit, "Leegend," until Feb. 14 in Finale Art Gallery, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. Lee's common subjects are mostly comic characters, folklore, monsters and fairies. His expressive strokes make them come alive. Call 6342411.



"BAYWATCH Victims," by Romeo Lee

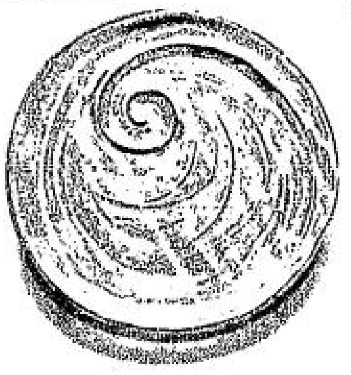
LEA LIM presents her first solo exhibit, "Pause," until March 1 in Boston Gallery, 72 Boston St., Cubao, QC. Call 7229205.

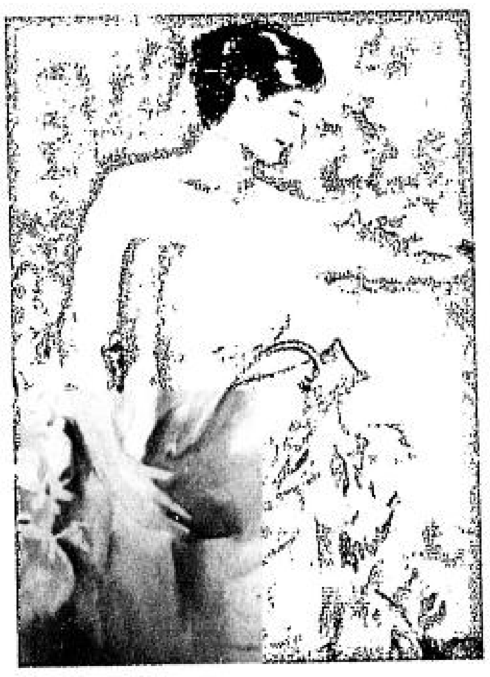
E.R. TAGLE will open his one-man exhibit featuring Mother and Child and other figurative works on Feb. 8 at the World Music Room (WMR), Family KTV at the Promenade Mall, Greenhills, San Juan. Call 8112432 or 09275522288.

RUEL CAASI presents "Recent Works," until Feb. 28 at the Frio Mixx-Shang Arts Space, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Caasi describes his nonrepresentational works as attempts in rendering a visual "metaphysical presence of subjectivity," in expression of concepts of "presence and absence, identity and difference." Call 6327921.

Pettyjohns at Glorietta

"Yin and Yang," an exhibit of new works in stoneware and porcelain by husband-and-wife artists/potters Jon and Tessy Pettyjohn, will be on view on Feb. 10-23 at the Glorietta 4 Art Space, 3/L, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 7292980.





Larracas at Asia Art

Alpha Larracas will hold her fifth solo exhibit, "Of Love Grace @ Color," on Feb. 11, 6 p.m., Asia Art Gallery, Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit will showcase Alpha's new works featuring female figures in a lyrical and dreamlike atmosphere, filtered through smoky veils and achieved through a wet-on-wet technique.

"PIOUS Beauty," by Alpha Larracas

Nemiranda at Renaissance

Nemiranda opens an exhibit with a theme about love, today at the Renaissance Art Gallery, 4/L Bldg. A., SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. The exhibit runs until Feb. 15. Call 6373101.

'Aussie West' at Ayala

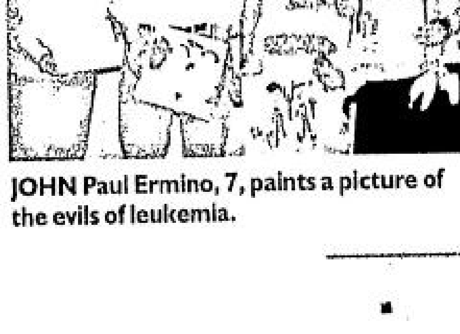
"Colours of the Aussie West" exhibit is on view at the MuseumSpace, Ayala Museum, Makati Ave. cor. De La Rosa St., until Feb. 12. The joint exhibit features paintings in various media, as well as several glass artworks.

Perez et al at Heritage

Four artists led by Al Perez will mount a show "East Meets West" on Feb. 6 at Heritage Gallery, SM Megamall. The other artists are Chicago-based Sergio "Jun" Rocha, Erbu and Jun Martinez. The show runs until Feb. 13.

Art show by cancer kids

"My Child Matters," an art exhibit of 20 kids with cancer and other ailments, is running in Gallerie Hues at MC Home Depot in Fort Bonifacio. It is organized by the Philippine Society of Pediatric Oncology in cooperation with Project Brave Kids and Kulay Marikina.



JOHN Paul Ermino, 7, paints a picture of the evils of leukemia.

Bencab . . .

From page C1

working with the state-of-art facilities at STPI gave me the freedom of creating works beyond my boundaries."

It was not only the process that was new for the artist. The resulting works use intense shades of red, yellow, orange, blue—different from the sober tones we usually associate with Bencab.

As Keong Ruoh Ling, a Southeast Asian art specialist at Christie's Singapore, says in her essay for the exhibition:

"Perhaps the colors are not characteristically his, as Bencab admittedly wanted to have more grey hues to tone down the boisterous effect of the paper-pulp compositions. They nevertheless enhanced the images that one is so familiar with."

The exuberant piece "Homage to Isadora" (47"x197") is described:

"Colors free Isadora. Unlike the warm, atmospheric mood of his acrylic on canvas, Isadora on the paper pulp is light, floating in the air, delightfully presented in a fusion of pink, sky-blue, bright orange, transforming Isadora from an enthralling portraiture of uncanny sentiments to a gay vision of kaleidoscopic effect, evoking a sense of rhythm and not just movement."

The Singapore Tyler Print Institute is an international publisher and dealer of fine-art prints and works on paper. It collaborates with outstanding artists from around the world to push the technical and aesthetic frontiers of printmaking and papermaking, creating edition prints and unique works on paper.

STPI was established in 2002 under the guidance of the foremost American master printer of the 20th century, Kenneth E. Tyler, with the support of the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, Singapore Tourism Board and Singapore Totalisator Board.

Through its Visiting Artists Program, STPI has collaborated with leading artists from Singapore, United States, China, France, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia. Each collaboration offers unique opportunities to pursue new and innovative techniques while opening the door for artists to push their art to higher levels of development.

Language pedagogy seminar

THE ATENEO CENTER FOR ENGLISH Language Teaching (Acelt) announces its 35th biannual conference, "Critical Practices in the Language Classroom: Teaching Students to Think," on Feb. 11, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Social Sciences, Audio Visual Room, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

The keynote address will be delivered by Dr. Isagani R. Cruz, lecturer, Interdisciplinary Studies, Ateneo de Manila.

This conference aims to make teachers aware of how their words, actions and lessons choices may promote conscious or unconscious biases for gender, race or social class. It invites teachers to take a critical perspective of their teaching.

Early-bird registration (before Feb. 8) is P1,200; walk-in registration, P1,300.

Call 4264322 or 4266001 local 5315.

UST announces writers workshop

THE CENTER FOR CREATIVE WRITING AND Studies of the University of Santo Tomas is accepting manuscripts for the 7th UST National Writers Workshop to be held on April 23-29 in Baguio City.

The workshop is open to writers who have not been awarded fellowships to any national writers workshop.

An applicant should submit three hard copies and a computer file (MS Word format in a diskette) of his/her manuscript (at least five poems or two short stories in English or Filipino); a resumé, a 2"x2" ID photo, and a certification duly signed by an institution/company senior that the manuscript is authentic.

Fifteen fellowships are available, a percentage of which will be given to the Dominican Network of Schools, Colleges and Universities. Deadline is Feb. 15. Call 4061611 loc. 8281 (Tuesday to Saturday); or e-mail aldimalanta@gmail.com or ust.ccws@gmail.com.

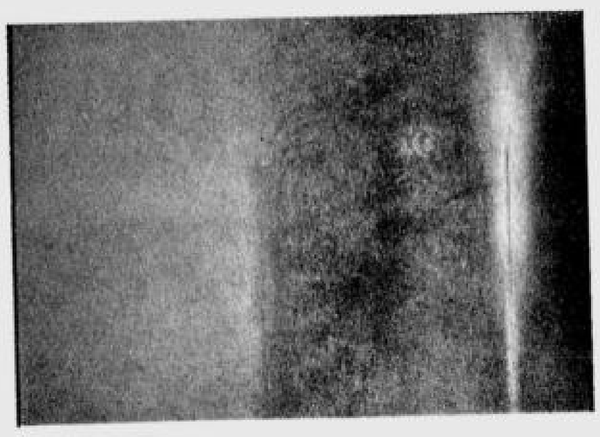
Lecture on Anita Magsaysay-Ho

THE ATENEO LIBRARY OF WOMEN'S WRITings (Aliww) will hold the 6th annual Helenica Lecture to honor a Filipina visual artist. This year's lecture, "Anita Magsaysay-Ho: An Artist's Story for All Time," will be delivered by Lourdes R. Montinola, chair of the Far Eastern University board of directors, on Feb. 7, 4:30 p.m., at the Ateneo Art Gallery (Loyola Heights Campus).

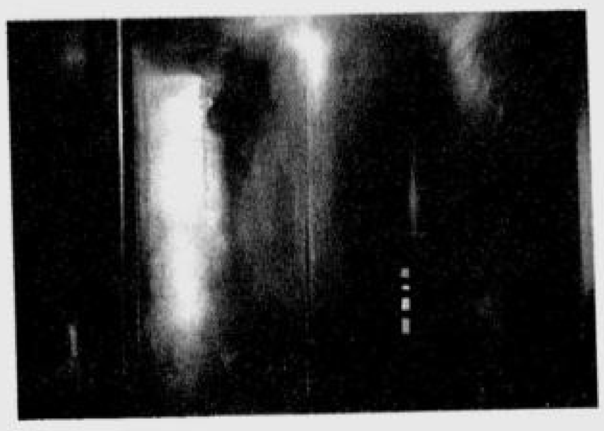
After the lecture, Magsaysay-Ho will donate the original manuscript of her autobiography, "An Artist's Memoirs," to Aliww.

Aside from letters and photographs, the artist will also exhibit a hand-drawn and hand-written autobiography bound by wooden covers that was made during World War II .

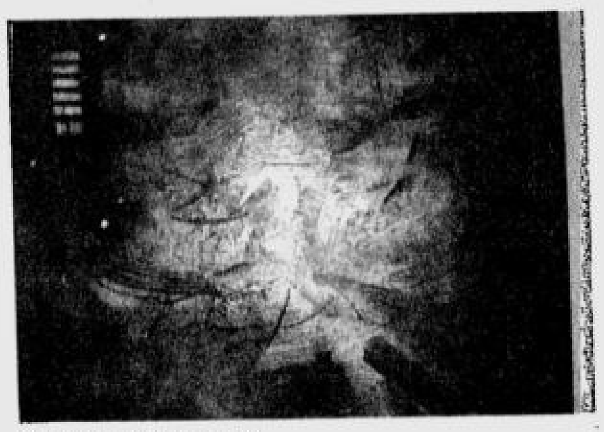
Meanwhile, the Crucible Workshop will also donate all research materials used in making the tome. Metropolitan Museum of Manila, which hosted the artist's first retrospective exhibit in 1988, will put on loan original documents from the exhibition.



"RED Earth"



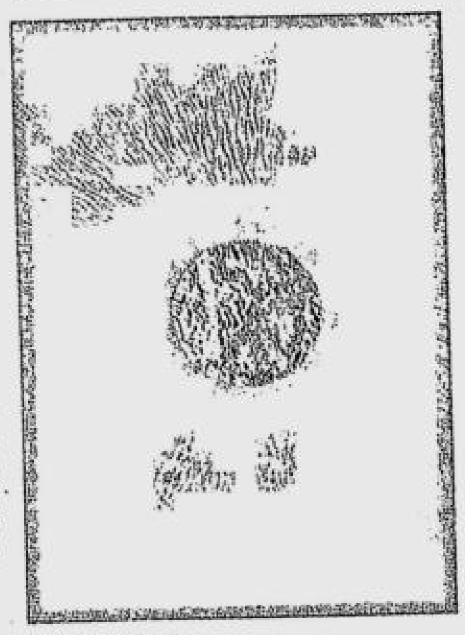
"COSMIC"



"VERTICAL Horizon"

Engineer of intimate landscapes

Fred Ramirez's abstracts are nonrepresentational art with a naturalistic bent



"SUN Rising"

By Lito B. Zulueta

THERE'S A HARDCORE QUALITY to Fred Ramirez's abstractions. Long known to paint interior musings that conjure interior moods and even distorted states of mind (in the true tradition of Abstract Expressionism), the artist is presenting landscapes in his newest show organized by Choice Expressions Gallery.

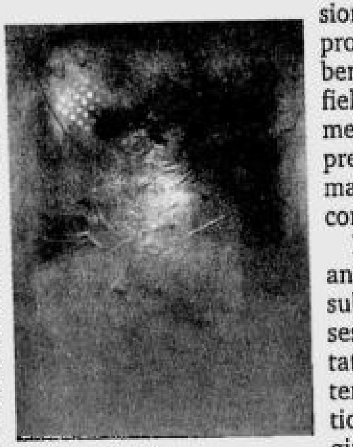
The conceit in "Fred in Red," of course, is that Ramirez's landscapes are hardly the type we associate with the genre. The works are more inner than overt. It could be said that here's an artist unwilling to be prosaic.

The other conceit (more of a conundrum, really) is that Ramirez trained as a civil engineer at the National University. So he is predisposed not only to be prosaic, but also concrete. In short, his inclination toward the nonrepresentational is surprising, if not enigmatic, indeed.

The acrylic medium provides Ramirez with the wherewithal to configure his unnatural naturalism. In "Sun Rising," the sun is not really rising, but already at its scorching peak, the title somehow a timid counterpoint to the magnificent strokes of the light-giver that looks earthly and concrete in contrast to the rays of light it gives off.

The trick here is that its emissions define the sun, not the sun itself. It could be said, therefore, that abstraction reaches the core through its effect, not through an ontological essay, certainly not through causation.

Clash of horizons



"RED Earth" 2

In "Red Earth," a clash of browns, reds, yellows and greens in the lower end of the composition defines the horizon in which the here and the beyond meet, meld, and mesh. In the higher realm, the red becomes stark, triumphant. But its reign is not absolute since there's still the presence of a square moon, earthy and earthbound as ever, dotting the firmament.

In "Vertical Horizon," the blues of the firmament are somehow rendered in aquatic colors: liquid blues, sandy silvers. While the composition holds up the landscape, the colors hold down the sensibility, immersing it in marine universe.

Ramirez's strong suit is his colors. "My early works were very colorful," he said. "Those in acrylic always had a textured finish for added body, and when they look at my watercolors, they say they see movement, like my 'Sunburst' series."

Not that Ramirez is a mere colorist. Like his icon, American abstract expressionist Mark Rothko, who protested being numbered among the "color field" painters, Ramirez merely uses colors for expressing an uncanny intimacy with Nature and the concrete.

Ramirez, in the final analysis, is stubbornly subject-bound, even obsessed. He is a representational artist caught often in the nonrepresentational mode. He is an engineer with an artist's compass.

"Fred in Red" will formally open on Feb. 9 at 6 p.m. at One McKinley Place, 26 St., Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City. Subsequent viewing will be on Feb. 11-20 at Choice Expression Gallery, 2/F Doña Consolacion Bldg., 122 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati. Call 8990717 or 8990718.

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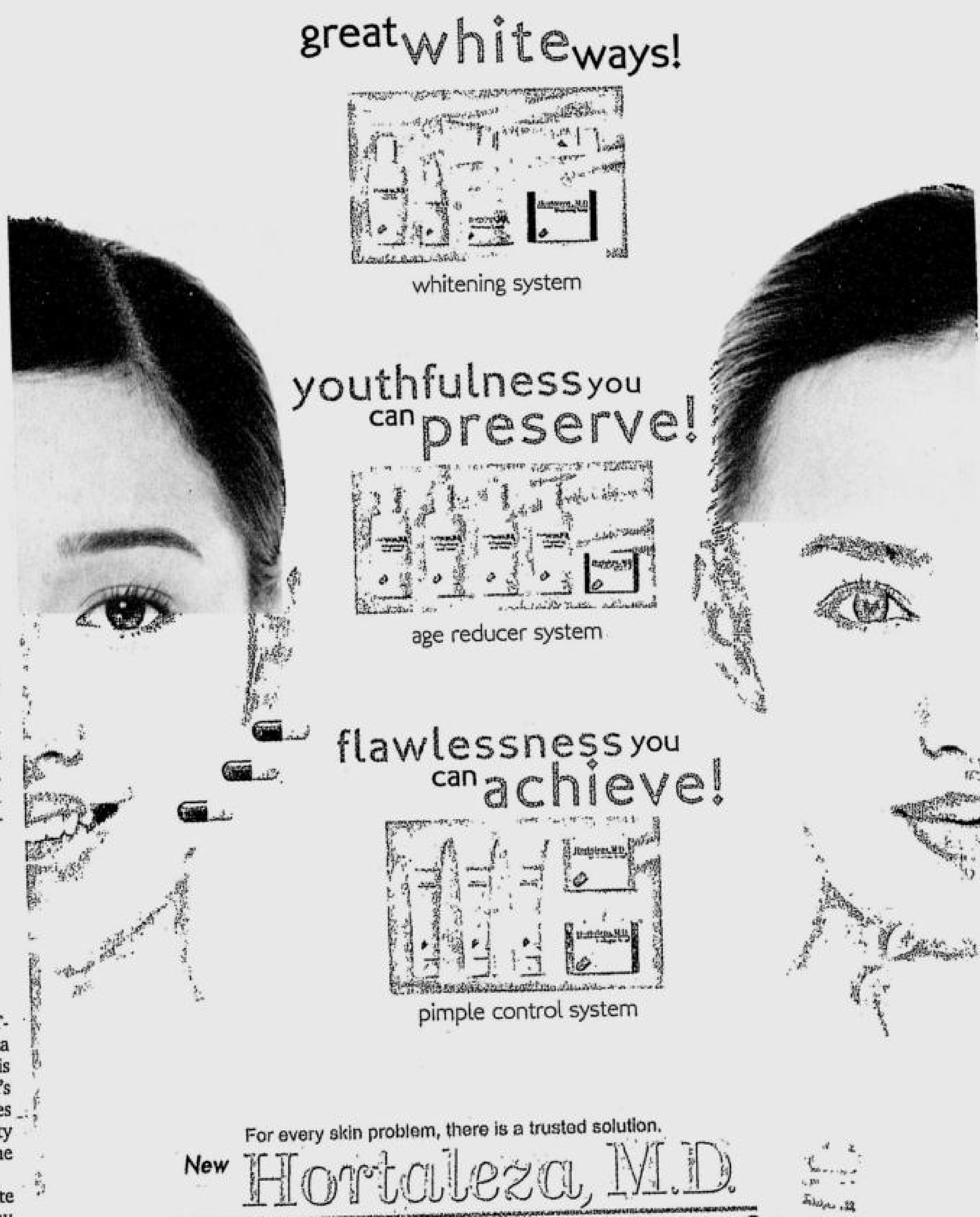
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Gabuco's obsessive figuration

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

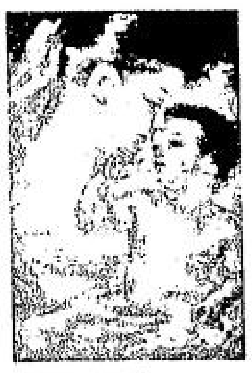
THE ARTIST'S FACILITY IN FIGURATION, particularly in the genre of portraiture, is truly amazing. It becomes most evident when he takes on the subjects of women and children, executed in his trademark watercolor and pastel media.

His mastery of the figure in these highly delicate media has made him a formidable presence even in the company of the most skillful figurative painters in the country.

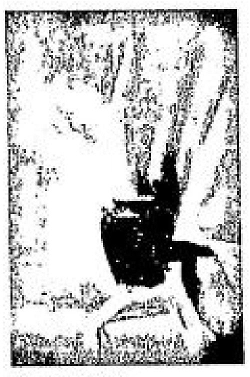
Carlos "Caloy" Gabuco has never ceased to amaze both admirers and detractors, an artist who effortlessly swings, so they say, in both ends of the pendulum, capturing reality in all its dream-like countenance and, at the same time, indulging in fantasy and make-believe to make his message resonate with meaning.

The paradox gains added significance in light of Gabuco's penchant for combining representation and abstraction, a rich distillation extracted from the delicacy of watercolor of which he is an undisputed master.

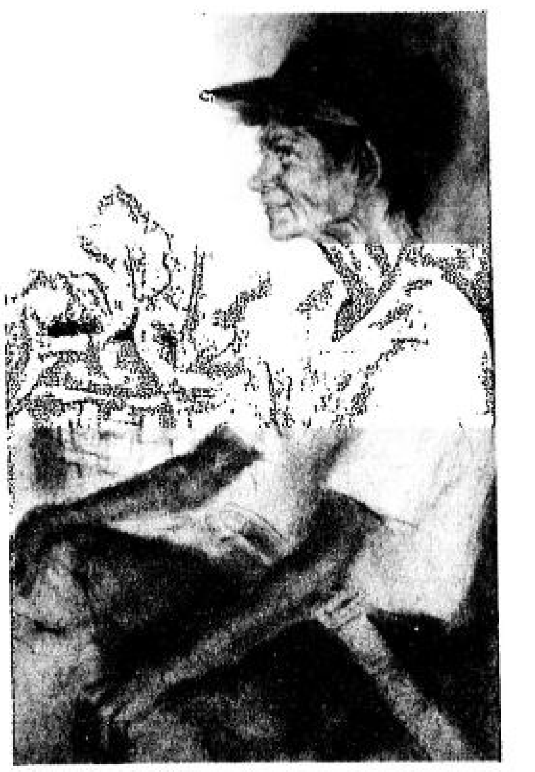
In this solo exhibit, succinctly titled "Mga Gawa ni Gabuco" (Galerie Y, 4/F, SM Megamall), the artist shows what he has excelled in these past two decades, demonstrating an obsessive love affair with the same cast of characters.



"MAG-INA"



"BANGA"



"SI TATANG"

The milieu is typical Gabuco territory: mother and child in warm maternal bonding, siblings in familial togetherness, kindred spirits in idyllic settings, sharing sacred moments of blissful companionship.

The eyes radiate a mother's affection for her infant or a father's nurturing gaze at his wife and child.

Gabuco's versatility in both aquarelle and pastel extends to a wide range of subjects: landscapes, still life, abstractions in the minimalist mode.

The works may have been done as welcome respite from his more demanding pieces (like commissioned portraits), but minor they certainly are not. They reveal the same level of craftsmanship, conveying the delicacy of mode and treatment generated by a lifetime of total dedication to art-making.

His training in the advertising field, preceded by a hard life growing up in Bongabon, Mindoro Oriental, and as a self-supporting student at the Philippine Women's University College of Fine Arts, sharpened Gabuco's instinct in capturing the salient features of the human figure.

Exposed to the art of the jeepney in his youth, which he had to paint to help support nine siblings, Gabuco has known the quintessential Pinoy character and what ultimately pleases his eyes. With the rich exposure gained from travels and exhibits abroad (his last sold-out show was in Brussels, Belgium last year), the artist has acquired a global perspective of the Filipino soul.

If the current show is any indication of the full ripening of his gifts in the realms of figuration and abstraction, the future bodes well for the artist who continues to explore uncharted paths with his mastery of this truly versatile and most demanding medium.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

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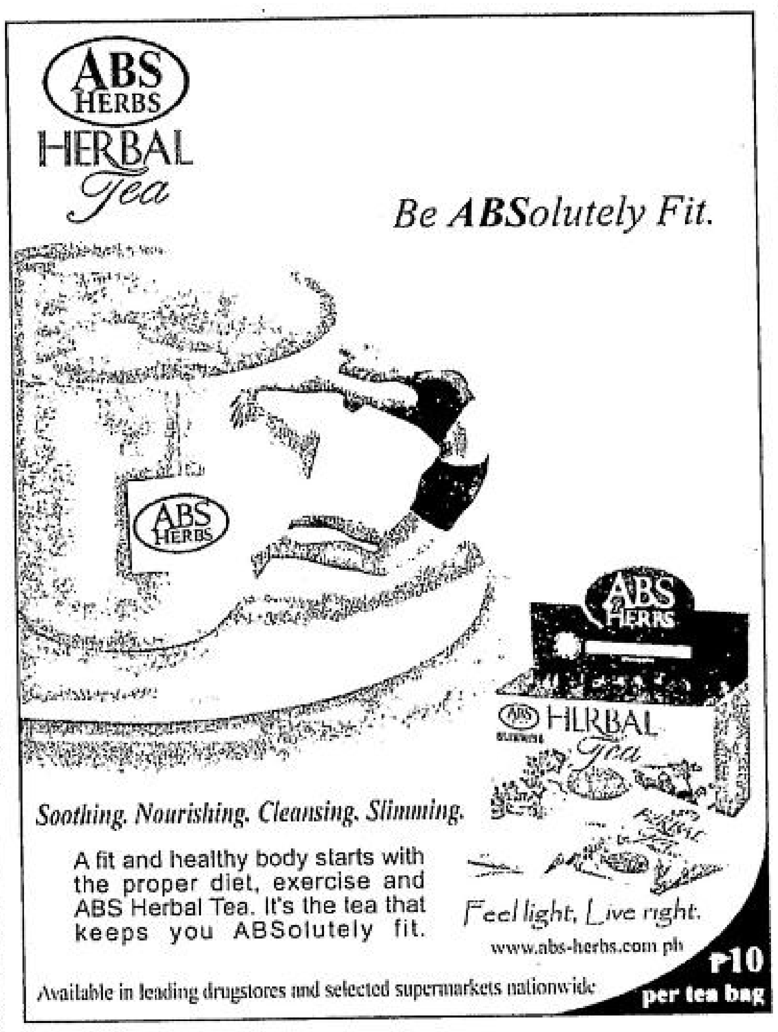

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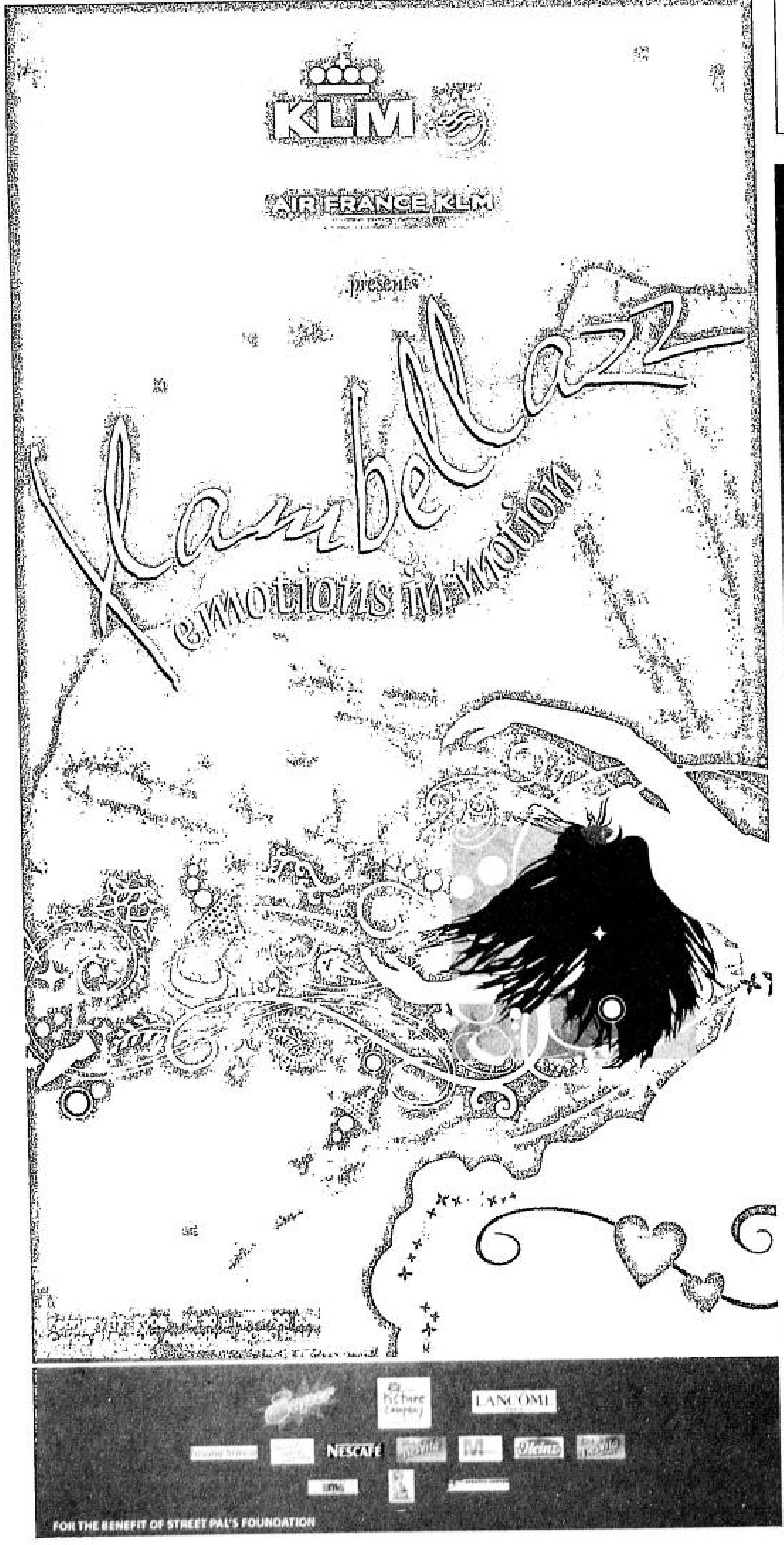

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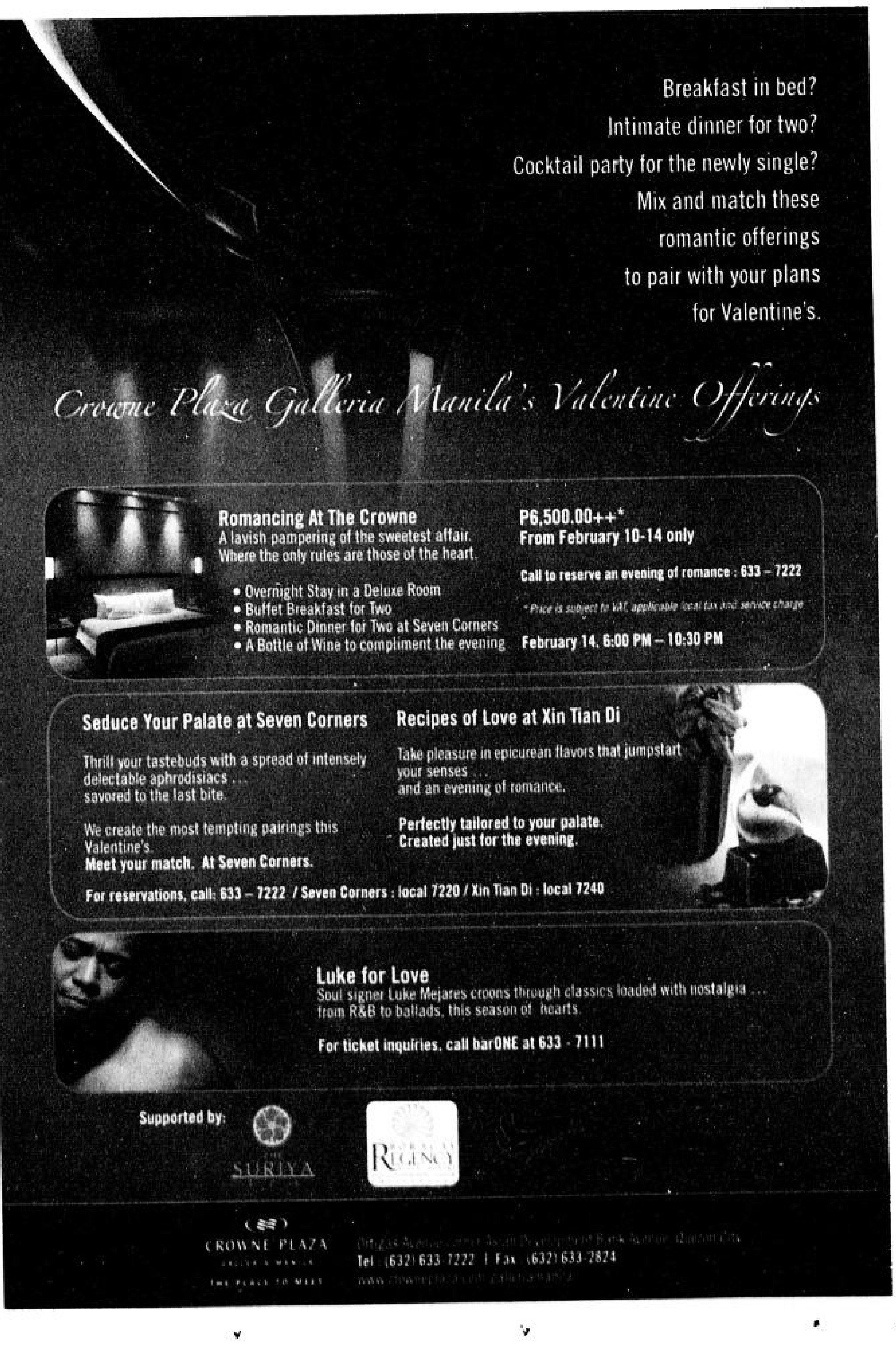
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100 years of Manila's German Club

By Anne A. Jambora

AN IMPRESSIVELY DESIGNED venue reminiscent of the old and new Germany will mark the grand centennial celebration of the German Club Manila on Feb. 9 at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

About 600 German nationals and their friends are expected to attend the historic occasion. It will be a nostalgic trip down memory lane as old journals and photographs in sepia chronicling the club's most trying moments during the two World Wars, when the club had to close down, will be on exhibit. There will also be a slide presentation.

There will be violinists at the reception, a saxophonist at the foyer, a Vienna waltz number, the sweet cherubic voices of the Kaibigan Street Children Choir, and German classical music to be performed by the Manila Symphony Orchestra. The party will officially kick off with the showband Spirit of '67.

Premium raffle prizes await the merrymakers, including round-trip Manila-Frankfurt-Manila tickets with hotel accommodations courtesy of Lufthansa airlines, and a luxurious driving experience courtesy of BMW.

Home away from home

"[The club] began as a social club, a home away from home for homesick Germans, and it eventually grew like a tree," says the German Club president, Thornsten Franz. "It is not only part of German history but Philippine history as well, especially Manila."

Founded at a time when the population of Manila was a mere 250,000-300,000, Franz says there wasn't much entertainment back then that the Germans decided to establish an organization that would preserve their culture.

100 YEARS/ D2

About 600 German nationals and their friends are expected to attend the historic occasion

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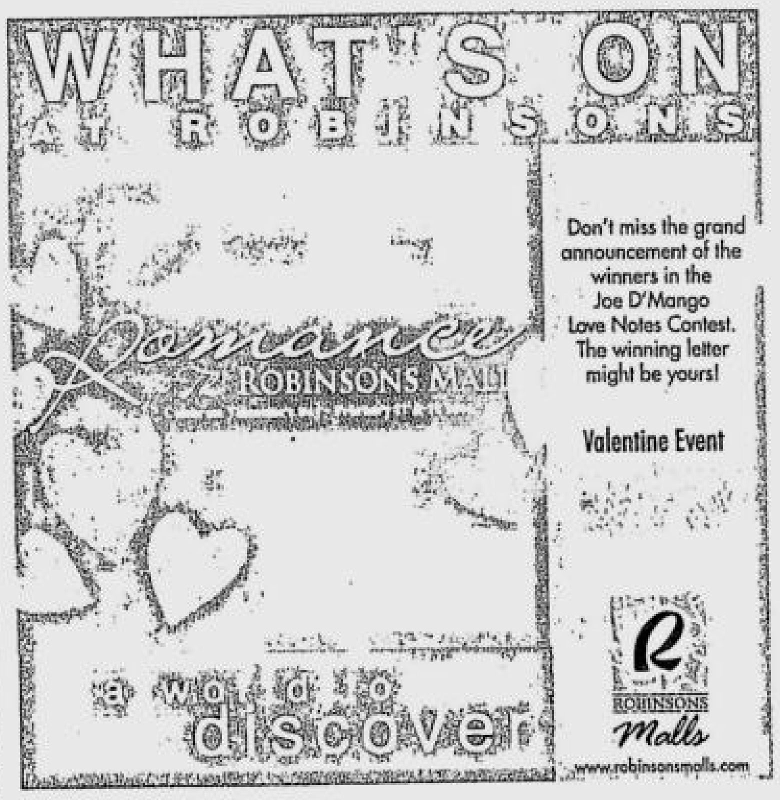
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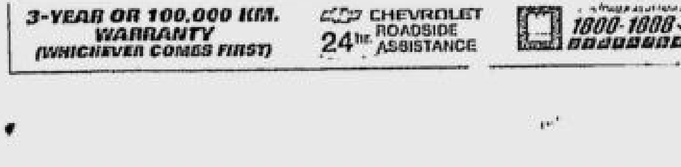

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100 years of Manila's German Club

From page D1

GERMAN Club president Thornsten Franz

Franz says the German population began trickling into the country when Manila opened to world commerce in 1820. Among them were hat-makers and lithographers, but the majority were merchants, ship-chandlers and pharmacists. From a population of 17 in 1849, the immigrants grew to about 100 in the 1880s.

The German Club is an offshoot of another German society in 1880 called the Deutscher Leseklub (German Reading Club). Two years later it was renamed Casino Union. During a general assembly in 1906, however, the members decided to rename it yet again into what is now known as the German Club (Deutscher Klub).

An old journal vividly described the early days: "We waved down one of those many carriages on the Escolta, Manila's main business street... Our countrymen have managed to uphold their unity by furnishing a clubhouse in a cozy and most comfortable fashion. Here, far away from the fatherland and mother's kitchen, the young merchant will find his friends, inspiration and entertainment..."

In true European fashion, Franz says, the early merchants, despite the warm tropical climate and lack of air-conditioning, tried to look dignified by wearing white linen suits.

When World War I broke out in 1914, the club quickly shifted gears from a mere social forum to embracing German officers and crew members of some 20 German merchant vessels who sought refuge to escape threats from enemy warships. Club activities, however, came to an end when the United States entered the war in 1917 and US authorities confiscated and sold the club's property.

By the end of the war in 1918, a good number of Germans had been deported and interned in camps in the US. Many German employees lost their jobs as their firms were taken over by the new authorities, and the lives of the 67 members who remained in Manila became difficult.

Bigger property

Those who fled to other Philippine islands, however, revived the club's social and business activities after the war. By 1925, the club had acquired an even bigger property, with restaurant facilities, a bar, billiard hall, bowling alley, tennis court and rooms rented out to bachelor members.

In the mid-1930s, the club's cozy atmosphere was threatened by political and ideological conflicts among the members of the local Nazi party and the opposition. When World War II broke out, the club was shuttered once again. Nineteen Germans perished in Manila.

"The German Club is marked by two World Wars. It took a lot of energy to open twice," says German ambassador to the Philippines Dr. Axel Weishaupt.

All of the clubs established by Germans in Asia did not survive the tribulations. But Franz says "despite the wars, the Germans were still treated well in the Philippines. They were not discriminated against."

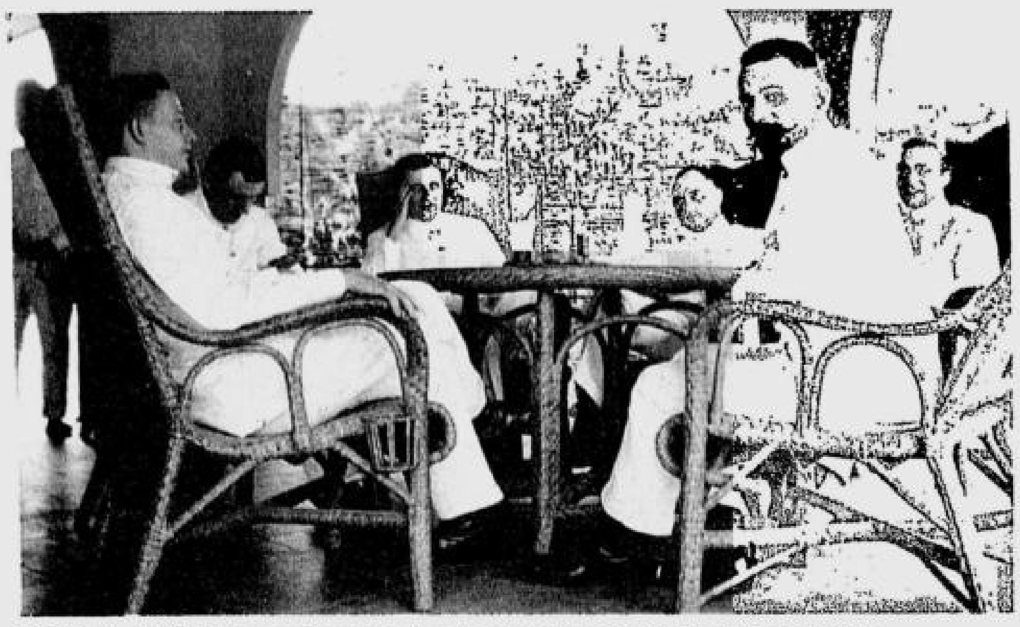
Dr. Gunther Matschuck, former club president and now chair of the club's centennial organizing committee, says the club today is driven to make money to sustain its operations. Its prime goal is to exchange views on economic affairs, and to foster social and cultural partnerships with its host country. Hence, nearly 50 percent of the club is made up of Filipinos and 16 other nationalities not only by marriage but through membership, he says.

With the absence of Germans in distress, Franz says the club has shifted the focus to its welfare program by providing scholarships to less fortunate schoolchildren in Manila. It also took under its wing the Heinz Woelke Foundation based in Baguio City. Founded by a blind member, the foundation assists the visually impaired.

Recently, the club also undertook a medical project to help harelipped children. It maintains a standing fund for help in times of natural disasters.

After 100 years and more than 400 members, Franz has every reason to be optimistic about the future: "The German Club will continue to be the meeting place for Germans to exchange ideas with their Filipino friends and partners."

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph



TAKEN in 1913, club members find time to relax at the veranda of the clubhouse.

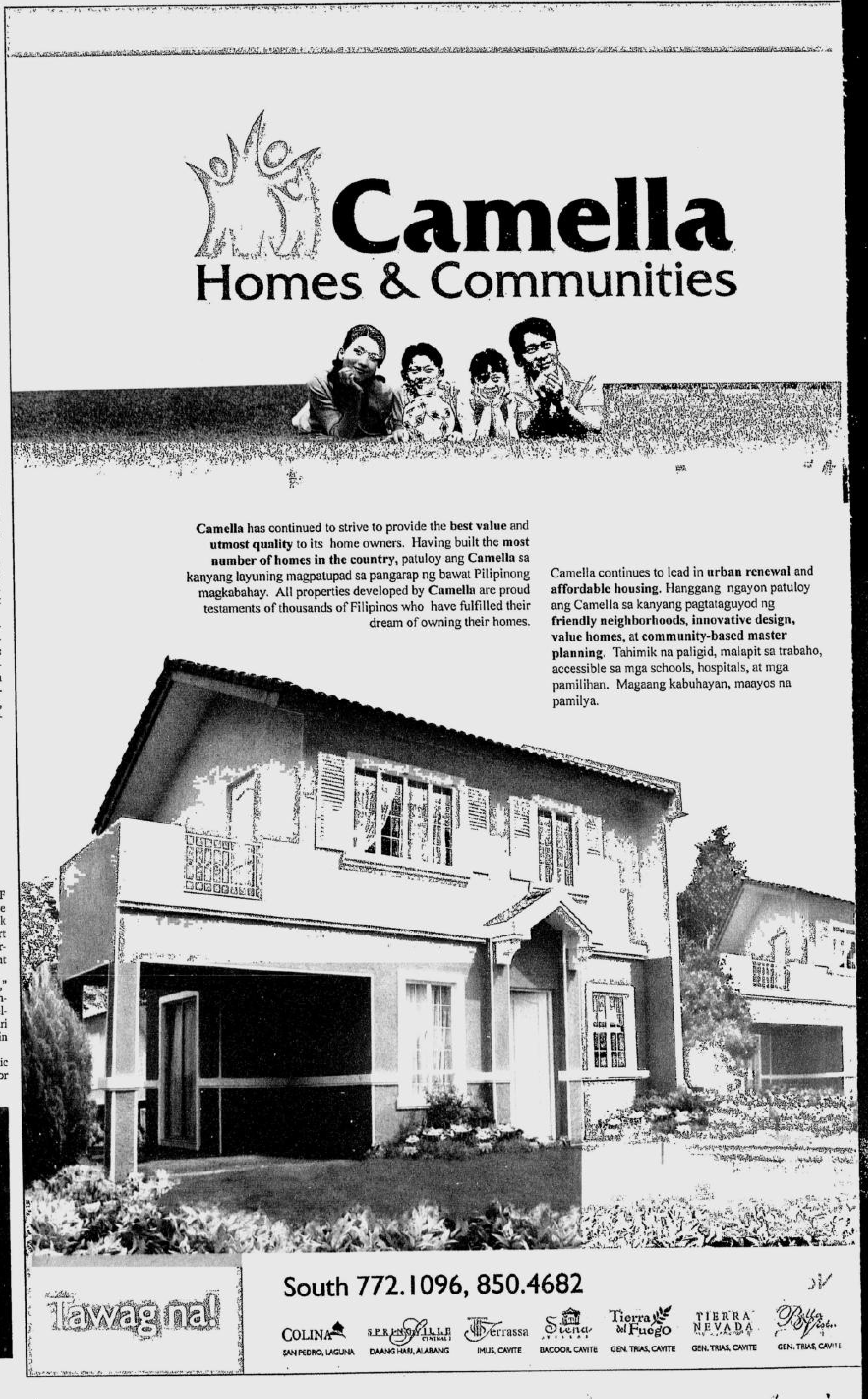
Bolipata performs Bartok

EXPERIENCE THE VIOLIN VIRTUOSITY OF Alfonso "Coke" Bolipata performing the Philippine premiere of the powerful Bartok Violin Concerto No. 2 when the fifth concert season of the Metro Manila Community Orchestra (MMCO) opens on Feb. 18, 8 p.m., at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The concert, "MMCO Before and Beyond," will also hold the world premiere of new symphonic works by Nilo Alcala II, Joel Cruz, Nelson Polvoriza , Francis de Veyra and Gian Mari Gianan, whose compositions will be heard in the final concert of "Xtreme Classix."

Call the CCP Box Office at 8321125; Music Center Center, Miriam College 4261822; or MMCO, 4261822.

COKE Bolipata



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Ballet Manila stages 'Don Quixote'

LISA Macuja-Elizalde as Kitri in Ballet Manila's full-length ballet "Don Quixote."

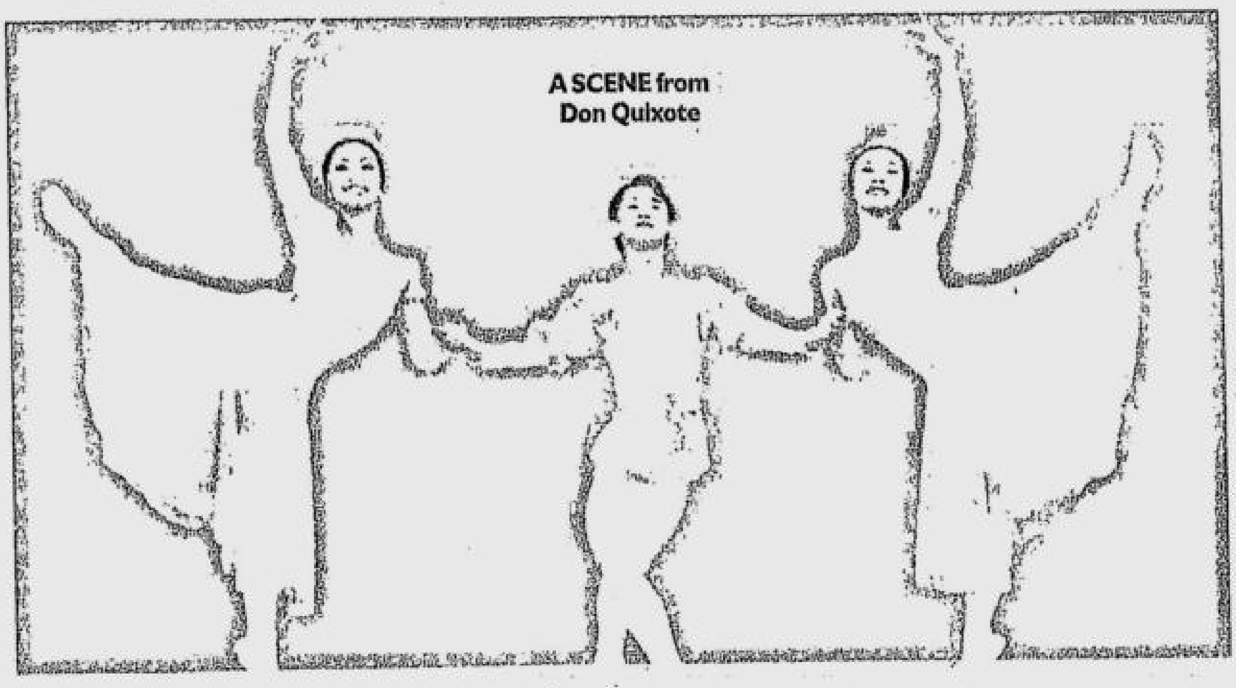
BALLET MANILA, FRESH FROM A SUCCESSFUL seven-city winter performance tour of Russia, presents "Don Quixote" as its initial offering in 2006.

This year marks a double celebration for the company, as it is also the 10th year of Ballet Manila and the 20th anniversary of its prima ballerina and artistic director, Lisa Macuja Elizalde.

"Don Quixote" is a powerful ballet in three acts, filled with feisty Spanish-flavored dancing, dazzling turns and spectacular leaps and, of course, a happy ending. Turning the attention away from Cervantes' main character and the ballet's namesake, "Don Quixote" is actually a light romantic comedy about Kitri, the innkeeper's daughter, and Basilio, the town's poor barber.

The demanding choreography of Alexander Gorsky and the fast tempos of Ludwig Minkus' score require extremely high technical ability from the dancers, and Ballet Manila delivers.

Performances will be at Star Theater, Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City on Feb. 17-19, 24-26. Call 4000292, 4043086 or 5251584.


A SCENE from Don Quixote

Short plays from Peta

PETA'S LATEST PRODUCTION, "PINOY Wannabes," tackles the flight of Pinoy talents and workers overseas.

Five one-act plays—"Ang Kamera ni Mang Leon," by Gamay Arkoncel-Dacanay, "Yung Plano," by Tim Dacanay, "Kalat," by Tina Manipis-De Guzman, "Panaginip," by Vida Krisantha Nael and "Pasaporte," by Janneke Agustin—make up the production. Among the directors are Soxy Topacio, Phil Noble and Melvin Lee.

"Pinoy Wannabes" was first brought to the stage via Peta's Laboratory production last year at Rajah Soliman Theater, Intramuros, Manila. Now it will be seen at Tanghalang Peta-Phinma of the Peta-Theater Center (No. 5 Sunnyside Drive, Barangay Kristong Hari, Quezon City) on Feb. 9-11, 17-19, 23-25 and March 2-4. Performances are at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Call 7256244, 7218604, 0918-9354166 and 0917-5394707.

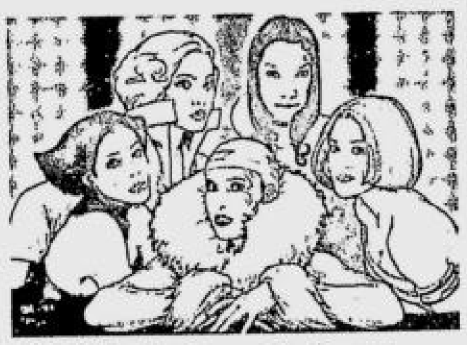
'ZsaZsa Zaturnnah,' the musical

FOR ITS SEASON ENDER, TANGHALANG Pilipino celebrates Pinoy pop culture with "ZsaZsa Zaturnnah, Ze Musical," a rousingly funny stage adaptation of the comic book by Carlo Vergara.

"ZsaZsa Zaturnnah," about a lonely *parlorista* gay who becomes a superheroine upon swallowing a mysterious stone, is a recipient of a National Book Award citation from the Manila Critics' Circle.

The show's cast includes Eula Valdez as ZsaZsa Zaturnnah, Agot Isidro as Queen Femina Suarestellar Baroux, Tuxs Rutaquio as Ada, Ricci Chan as Didi, and Arnold Reyes and Lauren Novero alternating as Dodong, plus the Tanghalang Pilipino company of actors. Chris Millado directs.

Show dates are Feb. 10-11, 17-18, 24-25; March 3-4, 8 p.m.; and Feb. 11-12, 18-19, 25-26, March 4-5, 3 p.m., at CCP's Tanghalang Huseng Batute. Call 8323661/8321125 locals 1620-21/0920-4065550.


QUEEN Femina Suarestellar Baroux (center, played by Agot Isidro) with the Amazonistas Nora A. (Tess Jamias), Sharon C. (Mayen Estañero), Dina B. (Wilma Doesnt) and Vilma S. (Deeda Barretto)

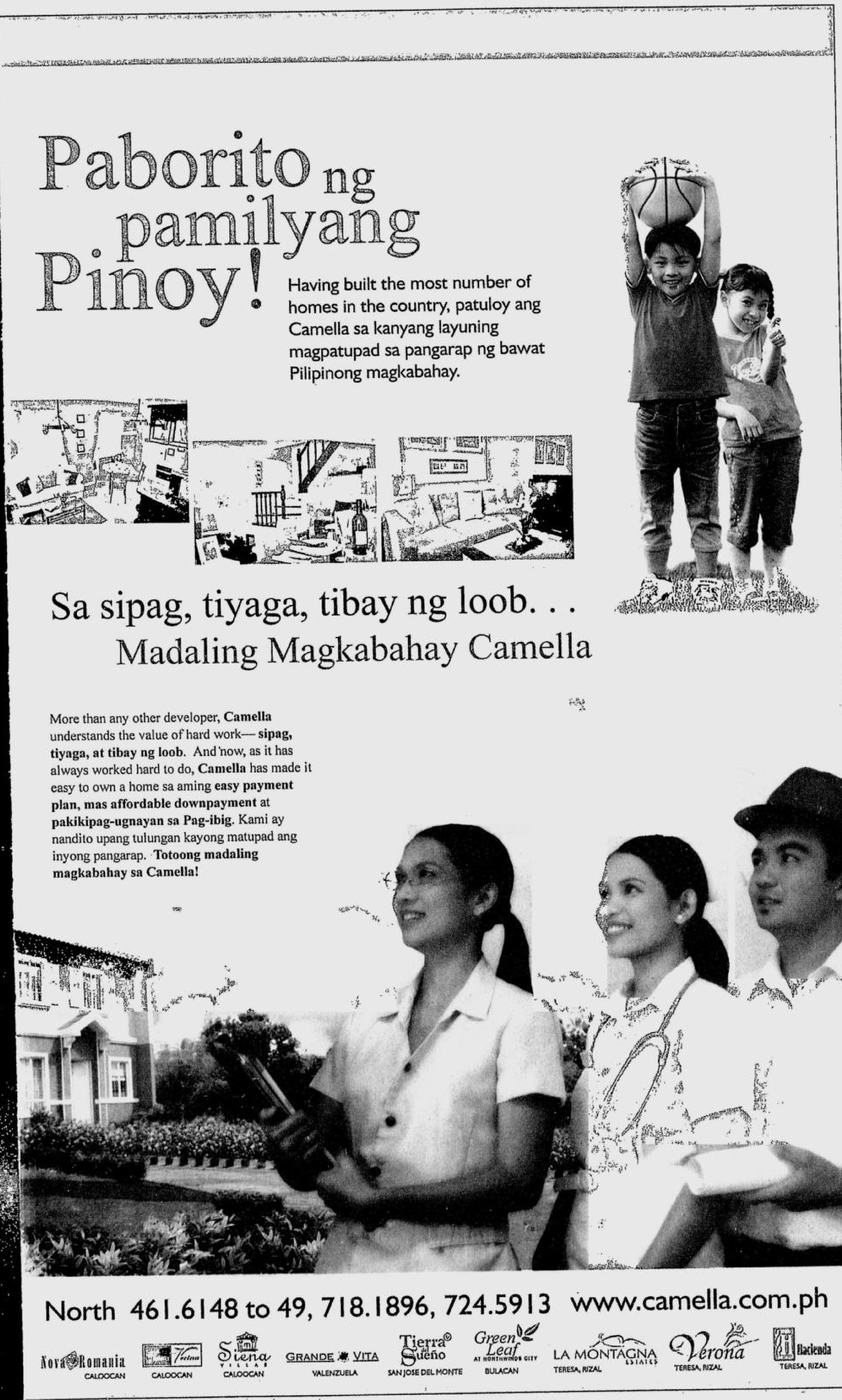
'Midsummer Night's Dream,' picnic-style

THE HUGE OPEN FIELD OF LA Consolacion College Manila on Mendiola (right beside Malacañang Palace gate) will host an experimental and interactive picnic theater version of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," on Feb. 13-14, 6 p.m.

Presented by La Consolacion College Manila and Dramatis Personae, the show features seasoned actors Alfonso Deza, Declan Patrick, Joel Caballero, Daniel Robert Magisa, Doods Jimenez and Rey Ucat, supported by La Consolacion talents Toni Rodriguez, Angel Rose Reyes, Francine Fernandez, Rosann Robles, Precious Jaraplasan, Irene Montellano, Annabelle Ang, Sonny Mahal, John Paul Pasco, Ana Afortunato, Wilklean Regalado, among others.

The show is produced, designed and directed by Lito Casaje.

Tickets are available at the gate before show time on a first-come-first-served basis. Call 3130513/7360235 loc. 34.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Theater of eternal spring

Dulaang Sibol marks its 50th year with a spry, sparkling restaging of 'Ibong Adarna'

By Gibbs Cadiz

IN THE LATE '80S, THE SENIOR HIGH-school class of a minor seminary in Bicol staged Paul Dumol's "Ang Paglilitis ni Mang Serapio," under the direction of a young priest-formator who also taught the class Filipino.

The priest was a true child of theater. He could sing, act, write and direct material, and he shared that boundless enthusiasm for the stage with his young wards. He regaled them with stories of how, as a young seminarian in Manila, he spent many enthralled afternoons watching the plays of Dulaang Sibol, the Ateneo de Manila high-school theater troupe led by Onofre Pagsanghan. ("Serapio" won first prize in a Sibol playwriting contest.)

Like Sibol, the local senior class had no money for a show with first-class production values. So they improvised. For a scene that required gouging out Serapio's eyes as punishment, they used gobs of cheap red dye for blood (it made for a spectacular Kurosawa-like spray that left the audience cringing).

The play's prosecutors wore Moriones masks, while the beggars' makeup ranged from charcoal to mud. "Just like Dulaang Sibol" was how the priest encouraged the class to approach their show with a sense of adventure and learning.

Mr. Pagsi (as Pagsanghan is fondly called) and his evergreen theater group recently celebrated their 50th anniversary by restaging "Ibong Adarna," another Sibol staple. That kind of longevity has attracted tributes from everyone, but perhaps it's fair to say that Dulaang Sibol's true legacy is the love for theater it has inspired in countless young people—even those in a quiet, drowsy Bicol town.

DULAANG Sibol members with their mentor-director, Onofre Pagsanghan (seated, left)

Strengths

"Ibong Adarna" was a spirited note that Sibol is here to stay for another 50 years or more. Already an institution in Philippine theater, it remains spry, fun and resourceful, if its latest offering was any indication.

This oft-retold tale of three princes who search for a magical bird to cure their ailing father sparkled with the strengths that have defined the troupe: its buoyant, sung-through music was written by a committee of six Sibolistas—Bianong Labiano, Oliver Quintana, Mik Afable, Kenneth Dacanay, Gian Abrahan and Enzo Araullo. (The *"labaha, dayap, sintas"* ditty—about the three things Don Juan needed to survive the Adarna's magic droppings—was particularly inventive.)

The ensemble also did their costumes, built around the lives of fishermen. So the royal capes were fishnets sprinkled with sequins, and the king's crown was a miniature *buslo* trimmed with beads and sparklers. When the princes sallied forth to look for the bird, they slung native woven backpacks on their shoulders. To suggest a brook after a parched journey, the chorus splashed themselves with imaginary water, sheer bliss on their faces, while murmuring, *"tubig, tubig."*

That last scene was among the play's highlights, a distillation of the purity and joy that amateur theater can summon. What "Ibong Adarna's" boyish leads lacked in stage presence, they made up for with heart and, in the case of Arjay Cansana as Don Diego, a resonant voice. (Niño Venida was Don Pedro, Josef Machuca was Don Juan.)

Chris Aronson was a visual standout as the mythical Adarna. Dressed in flowing white strips of garment, a Moorish turban preening on his head, the guy looked like a young Nijinsky.

The collective ardor of this youthful company was hard to fake—impossible, in fact, in an intimate, 156-seat theater. Dulaang Sibol's actors, musicians and stagehands were nothing if not fervent, their pride evident in the overall polish of their modest but stout-hearted production.

It's the kind of artistry that travels distances and affects lives, as with those scrawny high school seminarians of long ago. We know. We were part of that class.

Gods and monsters

While Ateneo's junior thespians dabbled in perky musical theater, their older counterparts went the opposite direction with a dark, disturbing drama.

Tanghalang Ateneo's latest offering is "Ang Nilalang ni Victor Frankenstein," the Mary Shelley classic made into a play ("Monster") by Neal Bell and now translated into Filipino by the show's director, Ronan Capinding.

Gino Gonzales' excellent set and costume design conjures the atmosphere of this somber tale: a stark white stage, backed by a wall of reflective damask-like cloth artfully creased to suggest a looming iceberg, and peopled with actors in severe black or dark-brown Victorian garb, depicting lives cosseted by fear and dysfunction.

On this arctic wasteland is enacted the drama of Frankenstein and his yearning for godhood—the ability to create life and control it, while his own life and relations curdle from icy neglect.

Bell's play swings the light away from the beast and back on Dr. Frankenstein, his pathologies and permafrosted core. Casting the creature, however, remains a critical step. The right actor for the part can thicken the terror immeasurably while also allowing us a glimpse of the noxious brain sloshing inside the sewed-up skull.

The play itself starts slow and rather ungainly, only twitching to life with the creature's birth. As the *"nilalang,"* Jake de Leon is this "Frankenstein's" most reliably compelling presence—an actor of jolting physical and vocal heft, projecting intuition and brute strength in the right measures.

Joseph Ignacio as Frankenstein's naïve brother William and Nicole Pacqueo as the househelp Justine are likewise noteworthy—actors who should be seen onstage more often.

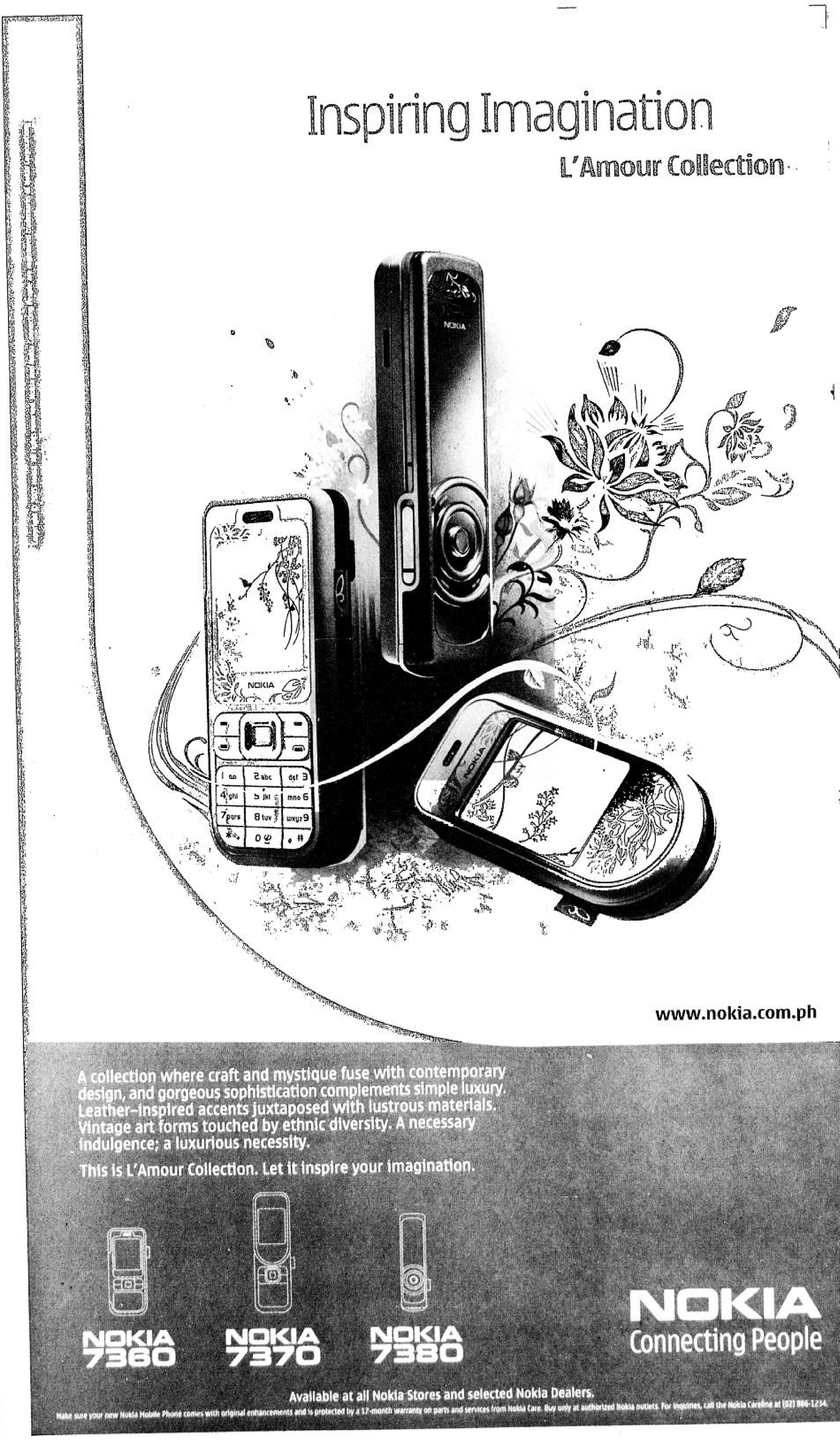
One would want to say the same about Evert Gandarosa, who plays Victor Frankenstein. This is very taxing part, and Gandarosa rolls with the blows like a dauntless pugilist. Through it all, however, a sub-layer of character seems forever unexplored in his exertions. His Frankenstein emerges as a figure of hard work but not much illumination.

There is De Leon's creature, however, and whenever it appears, genuine terror shocks the play back to life. Prepare to leave Ateneo's Rizal Mini Theater sufficiently unnerved.

"Ang Nilalang ni Victor Frankenstein" runs until Feb. 12. Call 0916-7110089 or 4266001 local 5121.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

EVERT Gandarosa, Jake de Leon and Maris Dimayuga in Tanghalang Ateneo's "Ang Nilalang ni Victor Frankenstein"



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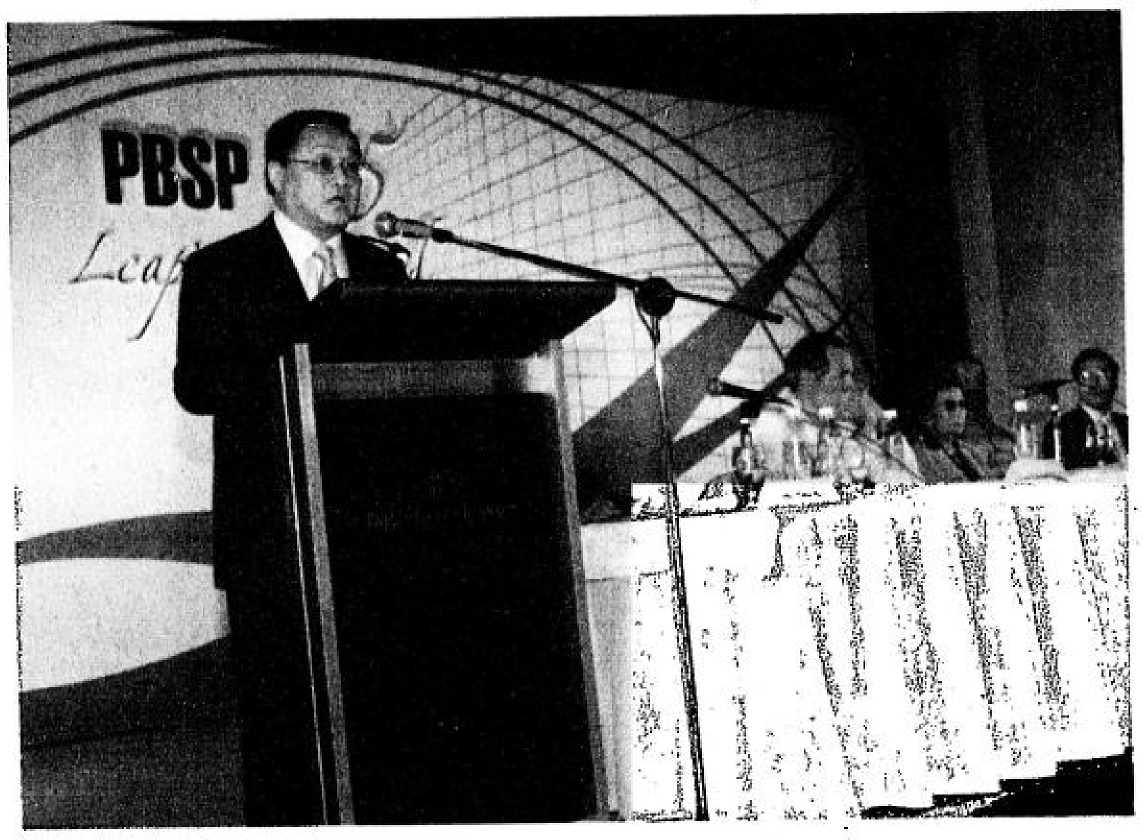
Philippine Business for Social Progress

A Bold New Face

The country's largest corporate-led social development foundation, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) launched its new logo during its 35th Annual Membership Meeting and Foundation Day celebration on January 24, 2006 at the Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City.

PBSP Chair and PLDT Chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan says that adopting a new PBSP logo is consonant with the increased level of PBSP's activities, and the need to bring the Foundation to contemporary times. "We believe this present day symbol reflects PBSP's renewed role in our society, as well as the values it has espoused these past 35 years," he adds.

With more than 300 guests, the celebration was attended by mostly chief executives of PBSP's member companies, partner non-government organizations (NGOs), corporate partners and donors, and friends from all sectors of society.



PBSP Chair and PLDT Chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan delivers his message

On it's thirty-fifth anniversary, it paid tribute to its 203 member companies who have been supporting the Foundation's poverty reduction programs.

What has PBSP accomplished in 35 years? P 5.8 billion raised and disbursed as grants or soft loans that have benefited 3.27 million Filipinos, among them the urban poor, the landless rural workers, agrarian reform beneficiaries, upland and lowland farmers, marginal fisherfolk, and indigenous peoples. Indeed, through PBSP, Philippine business - to paraphrase the world-renown Prof. Jeffrey Sachs - has reached invisible places neglected.

As PBSP moves into the second year of its current five-year plan, the Foundation has closely aligned its plan with the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a global commitment to halve poverty in the world by 2015. For the next four years, it has committed to mobilize P3.2 billion for its poverty reduction programs that encompass education, health, enterprise development and environment. This amount is more than half of the total budget in the last 35 years.

As keynote speaker, Mr. Salil Shetty, Director for the MDG campaign who is based in New York, enjoined the business sector at large, starting with PBSP's member companies to support in supporting the existing programs. He indicated that in a more inward looking strategy, more companies should begin to see their contributions to social development as an integral and crucial part of their long-term business strategy. More so, businesses should find areas where they can complement and synergize efforts for a greater impact in order to meet the country's MDG targets.

Philippine Business/E2

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Philippine Business for Social Progress: A Bold New Face

from page E1

With the support of its member companies, partners and donors, PBSP envisions that no less than 6,532 houses will be built, 28,676 families with increased incomes, 692 classrooms built, 23, 446 school desks and chairs provided, 20, 994 teachers trained, and 421 water systems constructed.

Mr. Pangilinan says, "Just like our founders 35 years ago, we must continue to be visionaries and find new ways to harness the resources of the business sector, so that corporate activism can indeed become a reality in our country - and a model for all the world to see.

And let this new logo be the bold new face of PBSP.

The new PBSP logo signifies the spirit of service which the Foundation has embraced. A green upward curve that rushes towards the top represents PBSP's commitment to help the marginalized rise above the challenges of life.

The color blue embodies the business sector while the green symbolizes the community it serves. The round figure that merges with the curve portrays Man for whom and with whom PBSP dedicates its mission.

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Keynote speaker Salil Shetty, United Nations' director for the Millennium Campaign

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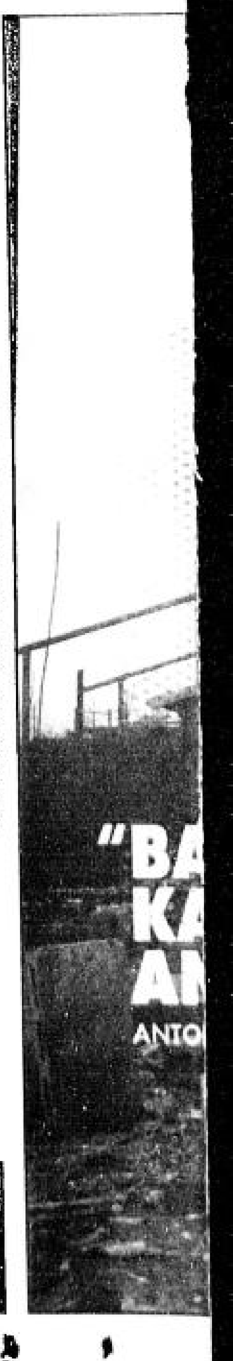

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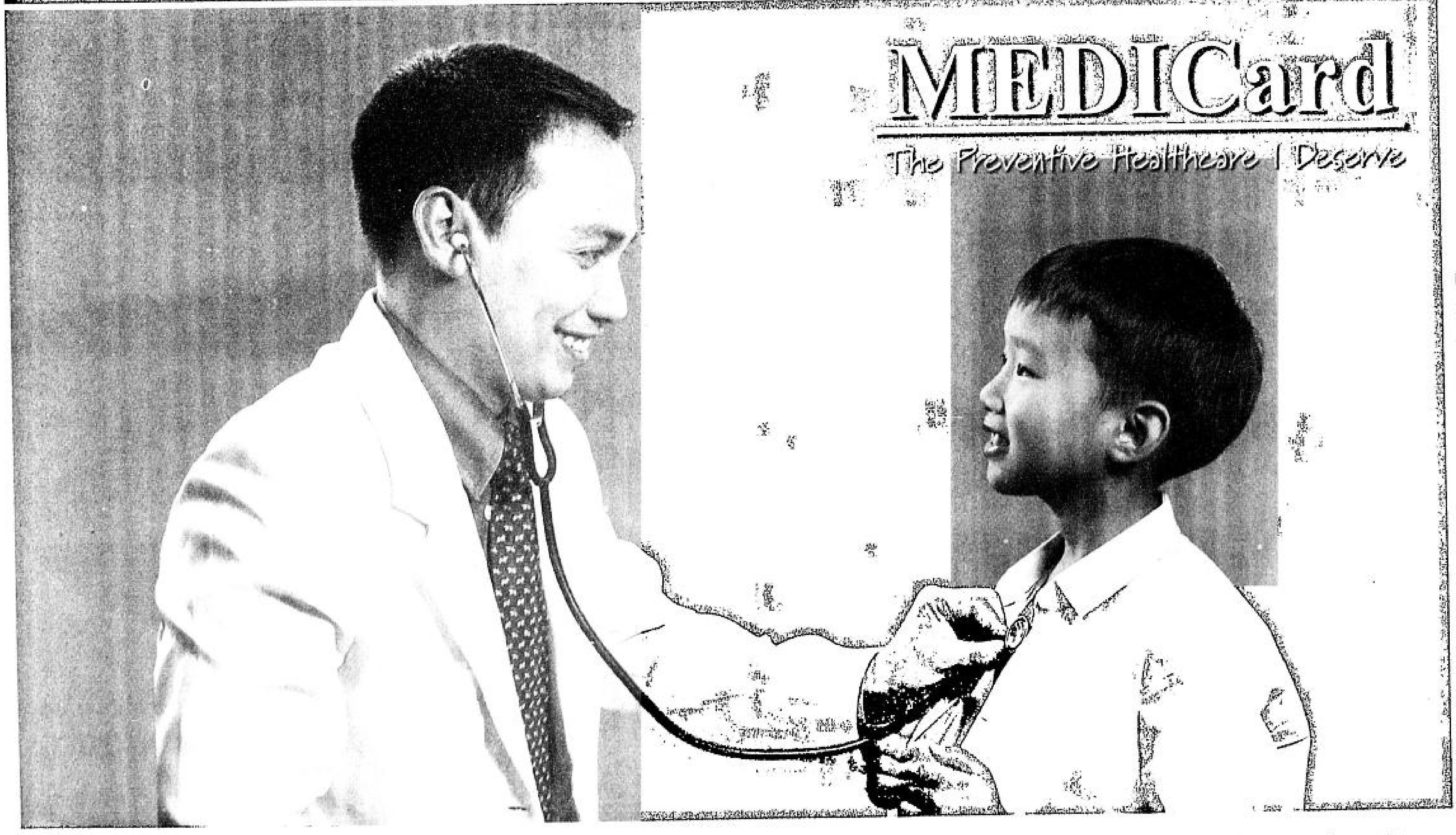

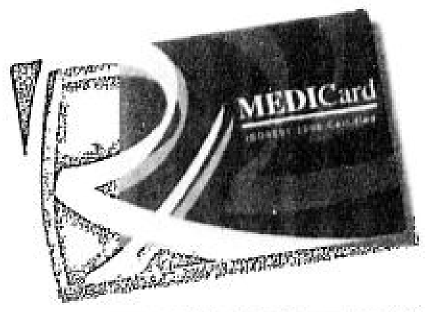

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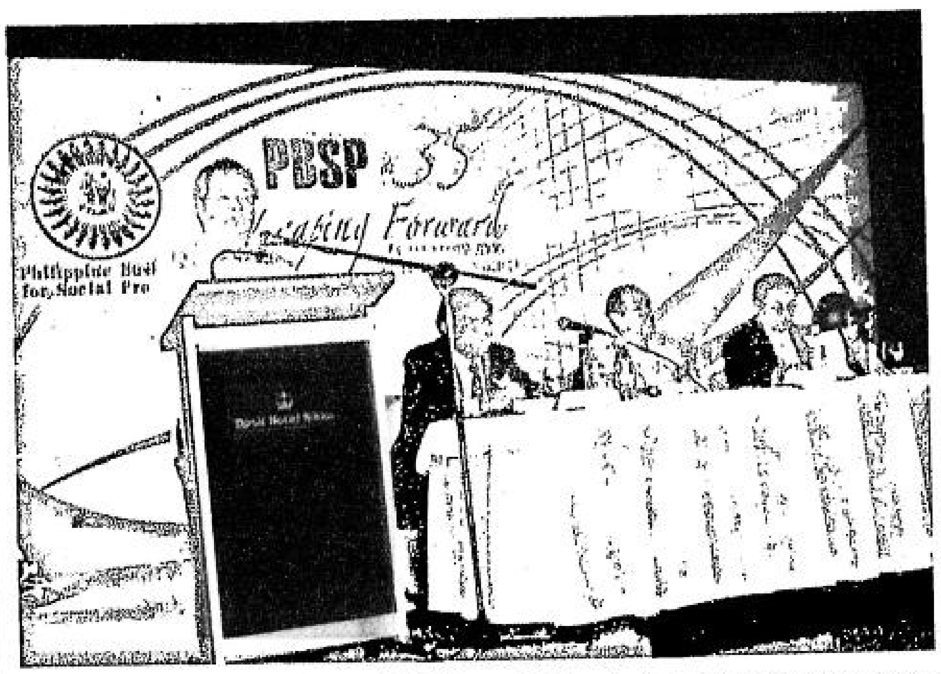
rogress. Thirty-five years later, PBSP has gained a place in history...

> ness enterprises – large, medium, or small – have an impact on society beyond their established role
> ng goods and services for a profit. Businesses do transform societies. They not only shape our
> nd virtual worlds, but also create new needs, new hopes, new dreams. Indeed, because of its size
> nce, business must carry with it the commensurate measure of responsibility and accountability.
> ecisely what establishes the ground for corporate social responsibility."
>
> V. Pangilinan, PBSP Chair and PLDT Chairman

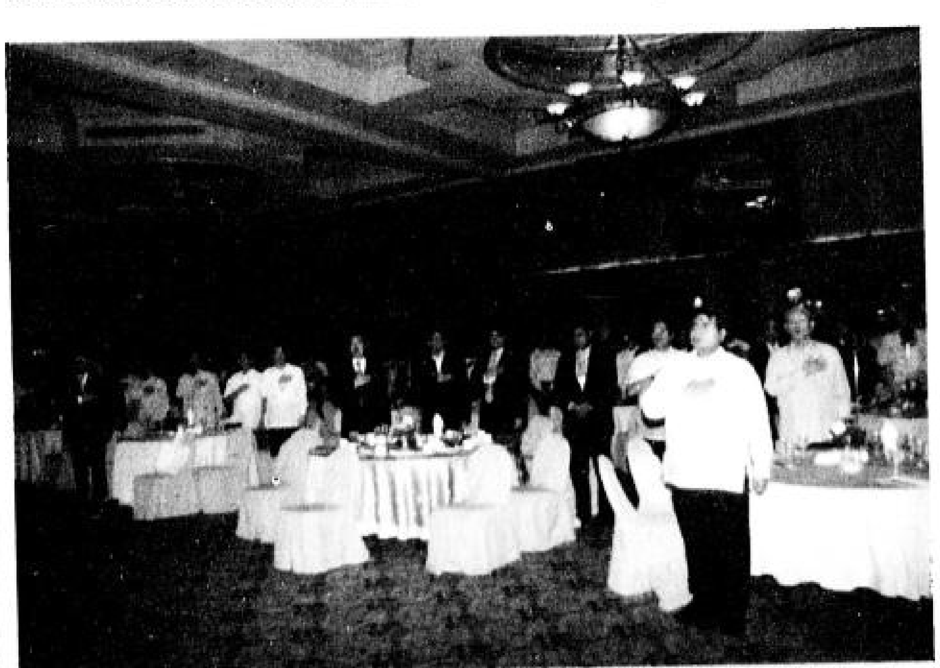
PBSP trustees Doreswamy Nandkishore, Nestlé chairman and CEO, and Hans Sy, president of SM Prime Holdings, Inc. and first EVP of SM Investments Corporation.

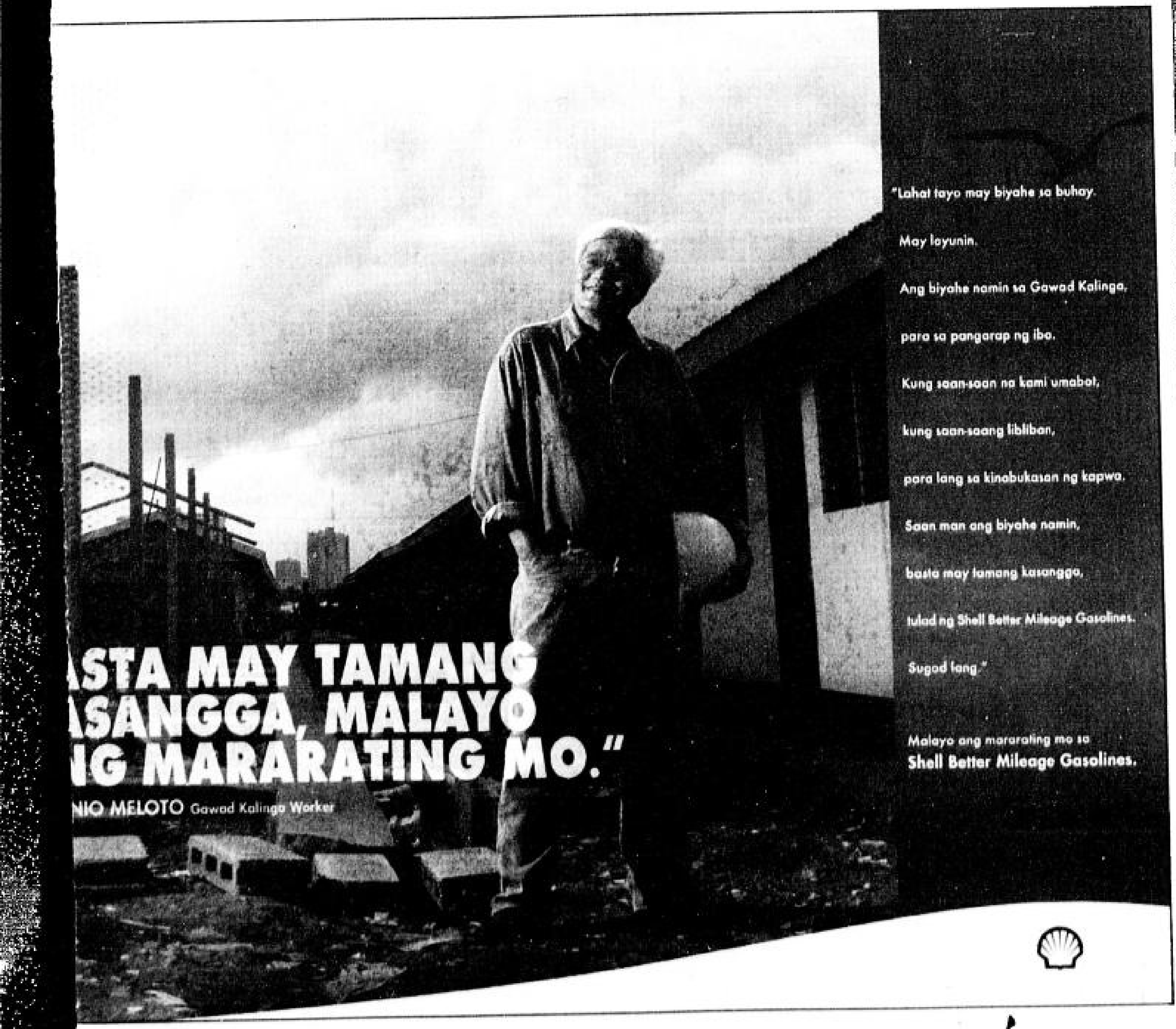
PBSP trustees Edgar Chua, Shell companies in the Philippines country chairman and Amb. Bienvenido Tan Jr., Modern Glass Distributors, Inc. president. Far right: PBSP executive director Gil Salazar.

PBSP trustees David Balangue, SGV & Co. chair and managing partner, Marixi Prieto, Philippine Daily Inquirer board chairman, and Paul Dominguez, director of Sarangani Agricultural Co., with Credit Suisse scholar Patrick Allen Garcia who led the invocation.



PBSP trustee PHINMA president and CEO Ramon del Rosario Jr. gives the Treasurer's Report


Over 300 delegates from member companies, donors, partner organizations and media attend the 35th Annual Membership Meeting and Foundation Day.

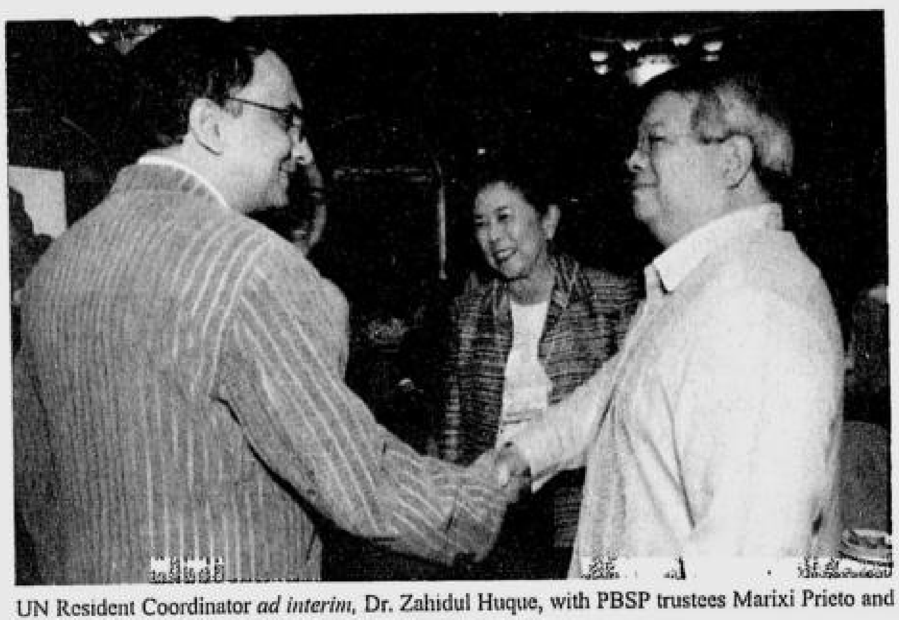

"Lahat tayo may biyahe sa buhay.
May layunin.
Ang biyahe namin sa Gawad Kalinga,
para sa pangarap ng iba.
Kung saan-saan na kami umabot,
kung saan-saang libliban,
para lang sa kinabukasan ng kapwa.
Saan man ang biyahe namin,
basta may tamang kasangga,
tulad ng Shell Better Mileage Gasolines.
Sugod lang."

Malayo ang mararating mo sa
Shell Better Mileage Gasolines.

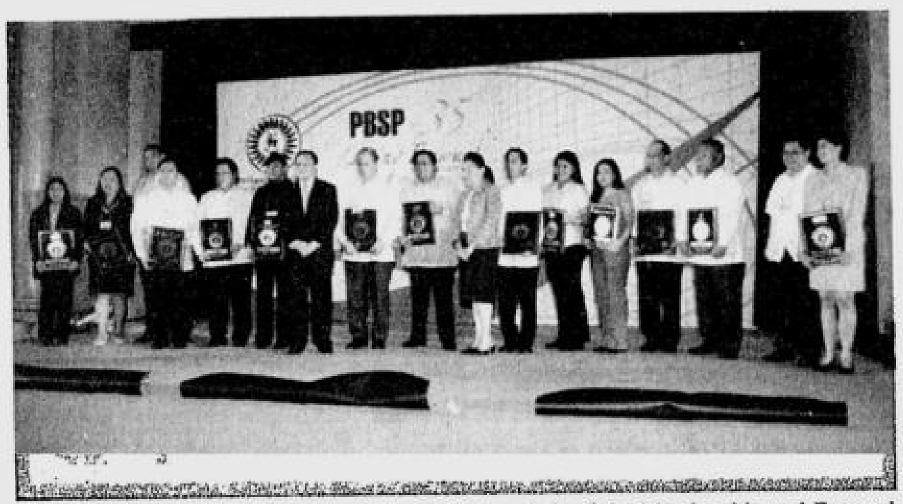
Philippine Business for Social Progress: A Bold New Face

PBSP
Leaping Forward
24 JANUARY 2006

PBSP and PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan with PBSP trustees CADP Group Corp. executive chairman Pedro Roxas and Ponderosa Farms chair Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio.



UN Resident Coordinator *ad interim*, Dr. Zahidul Huque, with PBSP trustees Marixi Prieto and Ramon del Rosario Jr.



PBSP chair Manuel Pangilinan and Marixi Prieto, chair of the Membership and External Relations Committee, welcome the new member companies.

What is PBSP?

PBSP stands for Philippine Business for Social Progress. It is a corporate-led social development foundation in the Philippines. Founded in 1970 by 50 of the country's prominent business leaders, its membership has grown to 203 companies and has committed to promoting business sector involvement in improving the quality of life among poor Filipinos.

PBSP is the first of its kind in Southeast Asia being the only non-profit consortium of business corporations leading the advocacy on and the practice of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate citizenship.

Why Join PBSP?

By joining PBSP, you join a unique group of men and women leaders of diverse businesses who are collectively addressing the root causes of poverty both at the grassroots and corporate level through the many programs – education, water and health, and enterprise development.

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Unilever Launches New Identity in Support of its Vitality Mission

Unilever Philippines, makers of popular home care, personal care, foods, and ice cream products, reveals its new corporate identity and renewed company mission. This is in line with global Unilever's efforts to ensure communication to all its markets worldwide.

The company's mission statement, stated as follows – ***"Unilever's mission is to add vitality to life. We meet everyday needs for nutrition, hygiene, and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life"*** was arrived at after an extensive review of the aspirations of consumers all over the world.

Despite differences in nationalities and background, a universal aspiration emerged – that is, people desire to make the future better for themselves and their children. This desire includes wanting to feel good, achieve more, look better, stay healthy longer, and to give children a good start in life. Unilever has summed these up in the word 'vitality'.

According to Howard Belton, Chairman & CEO, Unilever Philippines, "Vitality will be key to how we shape our portfolio and set priorities for the business as we move forward. It will also be the basis on which we look for new opportunities for consumers." Belton further added that Unilever is uniquely placed to deliver vitality in the three areas of hygiene, nutrition and personal care, through its interrelated scientific capabilities, consumer understanding and supply chain expertise.

In view of its Vitality mission, Unilever decided to undergo a corporate identity change. "Our old logo, although solid and trustworthy, does not fit comfortably with the new vitality mission and the diversity and richness of Unilever as it exists today. We have, therefore decided to change it", shared Chito Macapagal, Unilever's GM for Corporate Development. The new logo tells the story of Unilever and vitality by bringing together 25 different icons representing the company and its brands, such as the sun (ultimate symbol of vitality), shirt (fresh laundry, looking good), and heart (feeling good). "Our new logo is symbolic of our new vitality mission and is a graphic representation fo who we are, what we do, and how we do it", Macapagal added.

Beginning July 2004, Unilever companies worldwide will use the name Unilever, which will also be reflected on its product packs, in the Philippines, this means three changes:

Unilever's retail Foods business, after 50 years of success as Californian Manufacturing Company (CMC), will be known as Unilever Foods Philippines (CMC).

Unilever's Food Service business will change its name from UBF Foodsolutions to Unilever Foodsolutions.

Selecta Wall's will be known as Unilever RFM Ice Cream, to reflect the joint venture nature of the Ice Cream business.

The Home and Personal Care business and Shared Services will continue to use Unilever Philippines.

Unilever has been in the Philippines for 78 years. Its products include brands well-loved by generations of Filipinos.

Unilever

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